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MY DARLING.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Out to the churchyard under the snow
The graves of the sleepers are hidden from sight,
This is my darlings, lying so low,
Clad like herself in its garment of white:
Ah! she was fair like the sweet lily bell,
Earth gladly claimed and acknowledged her sway,
But Heaven cast round her its mystical spell,
And angels in triumph bore her away.

Oft in the twilight all sombre and gray
A hand seems to beckon the dreamy haze through,
Is it her fingers I long to obey
Or only my longing that brings them to view?
Deeper and darker the shades grow around,
Reliving the last ray of light to consume,
Hark! whence proceeded that murmuring sound,
Can she be calling me out of the gloom?

Sometimes I wonder when summer is green,
And birds gaily carol through long sunny hours,
Will she not rise in her beauty serene,
Blooming anew with the blossoming flowers?
Tenderly, sadly the night zephyrs sigh,
Stirring a moment the branches o'erhead,
Then with a shivering wail hurry by—
This is their dirge for the beautiful dead.

Gone is the fancy that held me in thrall;
Out of the glory of Heaven I know
Never a word or an echo can fall,
From loved ones above to mourners below.
Yet bright as a sunbeam piercing the night,
The power of faith is pointing the way,
And the day star of hope is shedding its light
Where my darling awaits me in regions of day.

SADIE BEATTY.

St. Leger's Love;

OR,

THE SIEGE OF STANWIX.

A Romance of the Revolution.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY BURR THORNBURY,

AUTHOR OF "RAVENSWOOD," "SCALE, THE SCOUT," "ADONIS AYRE," &c.

CHAPTER V.

BEFORE THE ASSAULT.

It is needless to record the fate of the tory whom Van Cleeker had attacked. In a flash the deadly work was done, and, running to the horses, the daring and triumphant miller cut their tethers, and in a moment was mounted and flying from the spot.

He knew not what enemies were near him—he had not time to glance around, but, noting that the way to the fort seemed clear, he dashed wildly in that direction. He thought not of attempting to reach the Hall, because of the difficulty of obtaining entrance there with his steeds, which he desired not to abandon.

Only a few moments elapsed before he was discovered by his foes, and he soon had numerous pursuers.

Once he had to dismount and remove a panel of obstructing fence—his horses being too heavily loaded to make the leap, coupled together, too, as they were.

His pursuers gained upon him in consequence of this delay, and their bullets began to rattle around him; but, quickly remounting, he bore away again for the fort, having, most fortunately, to make but few deviations from a direct line toward it.

It was an exciting chase. From the windows of Seymour Hall, the inmates witnessed it from the moment he emerged from the wood, though they could not believe that it was Wouter Van Cleeker whom they thus beheld flying in that mad fashion toward the walls of Stanwix. Yet it was like him—the deed they meant—only they thought he must have perished before.

The reckless miller was pursued to within two hundred yards of the stockade of the fort, when the soldiers covered him with their rifles, and he entered the enclosure in triumph. The bed-tick had been riddled with musket and rifle-balls, but neither rider nor horses was injured.

That he received a warm greeting may be imagined. With rapturous joy his wife—who had reached the stronghold with the majority of the women and children of the settlement a few hours before—threw herself into his arms and thanked Heaven that he was saved. But when she learned from his own lips the full story of his adventures, she checked her emotion sufficiently to upbraid him for his folly!

"Since you didn't kill Brant, Wouter," she said, "you deserve to be hung."

"And hung I shall be—around your neck," he answered, suiting the action to the word, and giving her an embrace more joyous than his first.

"The enemy are between us and the fort! We are surrounded—cut off from our friends!"

Exclamations like these, terrified and terrifying, arose from the refugees at Seymour Hall, as they witnessed a movement on the part of their enemies most foreboding to themselves.

"That looks as if those fellows thought themselves too strong to be molested from the fort. St. Leger and all his army are not far off, you may conclude."

It was Captain Hale who spoke, and he looked very serious as he did so.

"There's no use of panic and confusion and despair and all that, my men," he resumed; "but we're doomed here, that's certain. The only question is, will it be as bad for us as we have reason to fear? To encourage you, I will say that our main hope is to hold out against the savages, and make our surrender to St. Leger's regulars. The red-skins will have no mercy for us; the red-coats *may*. As for the tories, I count them with the Indians, only they're worse, if anything. So you see, boys, we've got to fight till we see a cannon levelled toward us; and that being a sign of the presence of the regulars, we will hold out a white flag too. If the tories and their red brothers ask us to yield—making all sorts of fine promises, you know—our answer must be from our rifles. That's the talk, is it not?"

A ringing cheer was sufficient response to the sturdy captain's words, and the determination of the little garrison was fully expressed.

"I'm sorry for the young lady, Miss Seymour, whom we have with us; but she's made of no flimsy stuff, weak as she is just now, and won't object to a little firing. The surgeon tells me that. Give those fellows yonder a volley, to teach them that we are to be respected."

His order was quickly obeyed, and this was the explanation of the firing that had been heard in Edith's sick chamber.

"We won't be much troubled by the red-skins," continued Captain Hale, "until daylight is gone: but the tories are more impudent. Another shot or two, men; but don't waste your powder. We'll have need of all that, I'm thinking."

A few of the bolder of the besiegers had shown themselves, even after the first volley given them, but they soon grew to be more careful. They knew the deadliness of a ranger's aim, and decidedly preferred to avoid it. The loss of several of their number also served to impress them with the necessity of more cautious action.

To understand fully the position of our besieged friends, and to learn what reason they had to believe that they could maintain themselves for a time against their foes, it will be well to give a brief description of the building in which they were.

It was a solidly-built stone structure, erected both with an eye to a tasteful architectural appearance and defensive purposes. The deceased owner, Colonel Jasper Seymour, having brought his family to a portion of the country comparatively defenceless, had not forgotten in building his mansion that emergencies might arise when it must be considered a fort as well as a home. Such an occasion had now arisen.

To guard against the danger of its destruction by fire—should ever an assailing force attempt its reduction in that manner—the out-houses had been placed a considerable distance from the main edifice; and, unless combustible material was first carried near, no enemy could hope to fire the Hall by applying the torch to its surroundings.

The doors and windows were strongly made, and when barricaded and defended by resolute men, it would require bloody work to force them. Only artillery could compel an immediate surrender. To this necessity Captain Hale, as we know, referred in his address to his men.

Such was the position in which our patriot friends were placed, and such were the circumstances under which they had resolved to attempt their defence.

"We might reasonably expect that our friends at the fort," said Captain Hale to Dr. Barton, who had approached, "knowing our extremity, would attempt our relief and rescue. That they would certainly be glad to do, for Gansevoort is an officer of humanity; but it would require a considerable force, and he cannot afford to sacrifice any of his men. He undoubtedly considers the general good of the cause, and, being entrusted with the defence of a most important point, he must keep his eye single to that object. If Stanwix falls there is nothing to stay the tide of desolation that will sweep this whole valley like a flood. We must prove ourselves patriotic enough to accept our fate, even if it be death to all, rather than ask a diversion in our favor that would imperil momentous interests."

"It is as you say, captain; and I think there are few who will murmur at the necessity," replied the doctor.

"If St. Leger enters Fort Stanwix as a victor, thousands of loyalists, now quiet, would rise to join his ranks, and almost every Indian of the Six Nations would lift the tomahawk against us. And then to think of the effect upon affairs further away! Schuyler would have both Burgoyne and St. Leger to contend with, and God knows the balance is thrown heavily against him already."

"Alas, yes," sighed the surgeon, reflecting gloomily, as he could hardly avoid, upon the unpromising aspect of the war in that quarter.

"What is really your opinion of Gansevoort's ability to maintain his post?" he asked earnestly, after a pause.

Captain Hale looked more dubious than ever as he answered:

"The colonel will hold out as long as it would be possible for any man to do, but unless the siege is raised by outside aid, Stanwix must fall. It is a terrible prospect, but Gansevoort is not one to be disheartened by that. He will do his duty, even if he knew that opposition to the enemy would cause the eventual massacre of every man of the garrison."

"But the fort may be relieved or reinforced at once. Is not aid expected from Herkimer?"

"He can bring nothing but militia."

The captain spoke with a slightly contemptuous accent.

"True; yet they would be of service. You are hardly complimentary to the volunteers of Tryon County, captain."

"They are brave enough; but undisciplined and rash. By the way, doctor, is not young Livingston—Mrs. Livingston's son—with Herkimer at present?"

"He is, I believe, though I have not learned the fact from the lady herself. She has not spoken of him to me."

"Is he not the betrothed of Miss Seymour?"

"So it is said."

"There's sad news in store for him, then—his mother, sister and betrothed all here with us, and no prospect but that of captivity. It will be a terrible blow for the young man. He doubtless thinks them safe at the fort; that is, provided he is not there himself. Ah! here comes Colonel Sayton."

As that gentleman approached he addressed him, saying:

"We were making mention of Lieutenant Livingston, colonel. Dr. Barton thinks he is with General Herkimer. Is that so?"

"Yes," answered the old man, sadly, thinking of the terrible intelligence that would meet him on his return. He was despatched to that officer recently by Col. Gansevoort with instructions urging the immediate advance of the reinforcement collected in Tryon County."

"And if the fort be reached, he will there receive the first intimation of the fate of his mother and sister?"

"Yes; and of Miss Seymour—she is his betrothed, as you may have heard. He will know that they are either dead or captives. God pity him! his distress will be terrible," said the colonel, as if the thought of his young friend's coming sorrow gave him more pain than his own misfortunes.

"Do not take the darkest view of the matter," urged Captain Hale. "We shall probably all become prisoners, but few of us may be slain—few of the non-combatants, I trust at least."

"Captivity may be but little better than death," murmured the veteran, more to himself than to the others. Then more cheerily: "Do not put me down as inefficient and despondent, too, captain. If I cannot aid much in the defence, I will at least endeavor to do my part in maintaining a proper spirit among our little garrison; though if we become hard pressed, I shall expect to be placed on active duty. You can surely find room for me."

"Your age and infirmity exempt you from service, colonel, though you will, I know well enough, be one of our most stubborn defenders when the tug really comes."

"I am a *veteran*," he rejoined, almost gayly, in allusion to his former extended experience as a soldier; "and you always expect such to show the others how to fight. Yes, I think I shall help you. But I must now look to my little charge—Gertie—whom I left below." And he took his departure.

This conversation had not been carried on to the neglect of any duty on the part of the commander of the Hall, for everything was in readiness to repel an assault, which, however, it was agreed, would not be made until darkness came. The only thing to be done at present was to keep a sharp look-out, fire an occasional shot or volley by way of warning to the enemy, avoid the return bullets, and diffuse a determined spirit among the inmates of the Hall. Though Captain Hale took—as he could not avoid taking—a gloomy view of their situation, he was gone the less determined to fight on that account, and was careful to utter no desponding words in the hearing of the already sufficiently frighted non-combatants.

No formal demand for surrender had yet been made by the enemy. Though they kept a sharp eye on the Hall, they were apparently too busily engaged in taking position further on, before the more important stronghold—the fort itself—to give more than an occasional shot toward the former.

Fort Stanwix was not visible from Seymour Hall, but the latter was, as its inmates foresaw, to be within the besieging lines when they should be fully established.

Artillery had not yet arrived, as Captain Hale concluded, from the fact that no gun had been trained against him; but a few red-coated men were to be seen. He was confident, however, that no important body of the regulars had come up, and—to save his party from massacre—he hoped not to be compelled to yield until some officer of influence was on the ground.

Half an hour later a man wearing a green uniform—one of Johnson's Greens, doubtless—was observed to approach, bearing aloft a white flag.

It was plainly his desire to parley.

Coming within hailing distance, he called out:

"We've time to attend to you now. Of course we ask your immediate and unconditional surrender."

"Will you not as our spokesman, Dr. Barton?" inquired Captain Hale, turning to the surgeon. "You appear to be at liberty, and know our determination."

Dr. Barton stepped forward as requested.

A deep and anxious silence prevailed for a few instants preceding his response to the enemy's agent.

"Will you grant us no terms?" he then asked in a clear, steady voice.

"Terms!" repeated the tory contemptuously. "You well know you are in no position to demand them."

"Yet an honorable enemy would not hesitate to allow them."

"We won't talk about that now. If you—"

"Now is the very time," interrupted the surgeon with well-expressed asperity. "The subject could not possibly interest us so much on any other occasion."

"Will you yield at once?" cried the tory; "or do you prefer to be cannonaded out?"

"Your artillery has not yet come up, we take it," answered Dr. Barton quietly.

"Burnt ont, then?"

"That is not such an easy matter."

This the fellow well knew, but he was exasperated to be reminded of it.

"Your doom is certain, anyhow; and just the best thing for you to do would be to give up at once. You know how we are in the habit of dealing with obstinate people."

"Yes we know," assented the surgeon bitterly. "And now hear all we have to say to you: It was our commander's first intention to answer any demand to surrender made by such as you, with rifle-shots. But seeing some British soldiers among you—whom we regard as possessing more humanity; less inhumanity, I mean, than you—we concluded to give you a hearing. But we do not intend to yield ourselves to any but British officers. You know our determination; and now we can dispense with your presence."

Dr. Barton made no attempt to conciliate the man; his hatred of his kind was too intense.

The tory, with an oath, impudently renewed his demand for surrender.

"You have just two minutes to place yourself beyond reach of our rifles," answered the patriot, closing the parley.

The fellow had sufficient regard for his personal safety to depart at once, cursing and threatening as he went.

The moment he disappeared from view, a volley of balls came hurtling toward the hall, but its garrison were under cover, and no one was injured.

"Unless the heavy guns arrive soon, we expect a night of it," remarked Captain Hale. "But until that time we may give ourselves a respite, except to maintain our watch."

"I," said the surgeon will return to my patient."

Poor Miss Edith!" murmured several of the men as he withdrew.

And their sad faces expressed more than their words.

THE SOLDIER FELL OUTWARD AND DOWNWARD INTO THE HANDS OF HIS CRUEL FOE.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DANGER THICKENS.

Catherine Coot was one of the number of the fugitives who had taken refuge at the Hall.

Her vociferous bewilderment of his hapless position; her senseless terror; her ludicrous concern for the safety of "Apraham"—as if he were the most important personage in the settlement—and her garrulous suggestions when the first paroxysms of her fear subsided, had not tended to elevate her in the estimation of her companions. Many were the uncomplimentary remarks elicited by her behavior, but her conceit and obtuseness rendered her insensible to either ridicule or rebuke.

When those below stairs learned of the result of the parley held with the bearer of the white flag, Catherine was quick to denounce her defenders for their action, though, had surrender been agreed upon, she would have been the first to bewail that.

"Goot Lordt!" she exclaimed, "tey ish not goin' to fight, I hopes? Ter Injens and ter tories will pe madter ten efer. Tey won't efen kill us eassy. It wouldt pe petter to take ter first chance."

"As you did with Abraham," a voice could not refrain from saying. The remark only served to direct her next thought toward the young man.

"Oh, Apraham! Apraham! I wonters where you ish now. You will nefer see me again in dish worldt! and we was gounten on such goot dimes. I wish ter Injens hadt nefer peen madet; tat ter tories was all batriots; and tat St. Leger *was* a saint, and not a tevel. Why toes efery poddy want to pe so pad?"

"Why do some folks want to be such fools?" rather roughly asked one of the servants of the Hall, wearied with Catherine's tiresome lamentations.

The damsel looked as if she thought the question an accusation, but ignored it by abruptly asking if any of those present had ever seen Brant.

The fresh mention of the dreaded half-breed's name, aroused a keener sense of their peril in the breasts of all; yet even then, the love of humor led one, with a view to tormenting the girl, to declare that he had.

"And what toes he look like?" she tremblingly inquired.

"Do you remember the great pine that was blowed down last month, on Prentle's Point."

"Yesh."

"Well, he is as tall as that."

"Oh, goot Lordt!"

"And has the strength of—of—

Her tormentor paused, baffled for a simile.

"Of what?" queried the credulous creature.

"Of Abraham's ox-team."

Catherine seemed to think this bathos; but felt slightly relieved.

"He uses human blood for paint—"

"Oh, oh!"

"Eats nothing but panther's meat, to make him fierce, unless—"

"Oh, goot Lordt!"

"Unless it is a young woman, now and then: provided—"

"You will frighten me to teath alife!"

"Provided she is sufficiently fat," concluded the wicked fellow, with a meaning survey of his victim's rotund person.

Miss Coot really came near swooning at this, and as it was not desirable to have her one hundred and ninety perspiring pounds, avoirdupois, on hand in such a state, it was thought best to desist from her further persecution. Besides, others now protested against the inconsiderate humorist's alarm of his listener, though few possessed the weak credulity of Catherine. But the mere mention of the name of Brant or Butler was in those days sufficient to send a thrill of terror to hearts that could hardly be called cowardly.

Dr. Barton, returning to the sick-room of Edith Seymour, acquainted Mrs. Livingston with what had resulted from the truce with the enemy.

The fair girl, notwithstanding her late swoon, and the unfavorable conditions attending her recovery, seemed really better than an hour before. She had less of that look of utter weakness, though the slightest movement of her person, made either by herself or her attendants, still gave her pain. But the surgeon was no longer concerned on account of her disease—fearing only for the effect upon her exhausted frame of the excitement to which she must yet be subjected.

He wished to prepare his patient for this, and to encourage her to hope for the best, even if the Hall should be carried by the tories, impatient to possess themselves of it, before the arrival of the regular troops.

Daylight was now fading, and an attack might be expected at any moment.

"You are better, Miss Edith," said the good surgeon, after his brief colloquy with Mrs. Livingston, approaching his patient with more than a professional lighting of his features, rejoicing to see the favorable change when a different one was so much to be feared.

Dr. Barton was a very plain-looking man, having a cast of features whose only redemption from positive homeliness lay in their expression. But he possessed a warm heart, a true soul and a sagacious intellect; and endowments like these are sure to be recognized and appreciated, no matter if their owner is not wholly attractive in exterior.

He was about fifty years of age, of tall, attenuated form, his person giving a curiously mingled idea of both awkwardness and grace. One could but respect him at the first glance, he was so entirely manly, self-controlled and resolute in his bearing. Of strong individuality, kindliness was its first element, and sympathy the next. And he was as brave as he was kind.

The reply to the words he had addressed to Miss Seymour was a smile much fainter than his own, but not less expressive of gladness.

"Yes," she then said in addition, "and I rejoice quite as much for the sake of others as for my own, for I know that—independent of our common danger—too much of the solicitude of yourself and dear Mrs. Livingston is given to my own peculiar case."

"We both feel very deeply for you, it is true, for to be ill in the midst of such terrible surroundings is more than the strongest ought to bear. But I am proud of you, Miss Seymour; you are the most patient patient I ever had," said the surgeon with another of his great warm smiles, which his thin face had not room for at all. And so it just beamed out in a sort of light that was wonderful for such a plain, unsentimental countenance as his.

"Do you think—do you think, doctor," asked Edith a little waveringly, that the troops will reach the fort?"

"What troops?" he said, somewhat startled at the question.

"Herkimer's."

"Ah! she is thinking of Lionel," said he to himself. And then, in answer to her question: "I fear not before it is invested. But do not trouble yourself with anything now but your own misfortunes. I will not permit it."

He took the fair hand of the maiden in his own, saying nothing, for he dreaded to have her distress herself with the thought of what her lover's feelings would be if he knew the situation of those so dear to him.

Twilight deepened in the room.

"Miss Edith," spoke Dr. Barton, breaking a silence that had ensued, "let me prepare you for what must shortly occur. Be not unduly excited, if in your weak condition you can avoid it, by the noise of defence and the tumult without. The Hall will soon be assailed; the uproar will be terrifying; but we shall be safe at least for the night. The enemy, we think, can neither burn us out, nor force their way in. To-morrow we shall be compelled to yield, but to civilized foes—I do not regard the tories as such—and the non-combatants of our number will at least be protected. Could the knowledge of what is transpiring be kept from you, we would gladly do it; but that you know, is impossible. The daughter of Jasper Seymour—"

"The daughter of Jasper Seymour," interposed Edith, in a proud though feeble voice, "hopes to be enabled not to disgrace her descent. Thank you, doctor, for your kindness in preparing me for the coming ordeal. It will be terrible, I doubt not, but I shall think more of others than of myself. If you are going below, please send Colonel Sayton to me; and Gertie, also."

Mrs. Livingston, a fresh pang wringing her heart at the mention of her darling's name, objected to this last request.

"No, no, Edith; the child may distress you by her alarm and cries. Colonel Sayton shall come; and I will then go to my daughter, returning to you after a time."

The surgeon left the room.

Just as he reached the side of Colonel Sayton, a terrific mingled yell and whoop—the cry of white and savage enemies combined—was heard without. A heavy volley of shots followed. A trampling of feet was heard overhead and below, as every man rushed to his post.

"The work has commenced," said the two men simultaneously.

CHAPTER VII.

A NIGHT OF HORRORS.

By open and bold assault the assailants of the Hall could hardly hope to gain possession of it; they knew how desperate the resistance would be, and with what an advantage on the side of the garrison. Therefore, though they fired volley after volley at the doors and windows, they did not supplement these demonstrations with attempts to enter.

The most effective means which could be employed in its reduction was fire, the drawback to that plan being nothing more than the difficulty of communicating the flames from the out-buildings, when they should be fired, to the main structure. But the inmates of the Hall knew that some way might be devised to accomplish this, and they kept vigilant watch to detect the first movements of their enemies in the horrible work.

The night was, unfortunately, cloudy, thus giving the besiegers a better opportunity to conceal their doings.

"We can certainly maintain ourselves here for the night," said Captain Hale. "The only question is at what cost of life; for if a hot fire is once enkindled near to us, though it can be extinguished, some of us must perish in the work."

Water could be obtained from a well that had been dug in a corner of the great cellar, so no apprehension was felt on that account. Buckets, pots and pans filled with the valued element were placed in every story, and by nearly every window, ready for instant use.

The perilous work of applying it was entrusted specially to men who volunteered for the service.

After considerable firing by the besiegers, to which only limited reply was made by our friends, their shots and cries suddenly ceased.

The silence was ominous of quieter but not less hostile work.

"Keep your eyes strained, boys, in every quarter," enjoined their commander. "The rascals are not idle, you may guess; they are contriving how to burn us out."

From the windows anxious eyes peered painfully through the gloom, endeavoring to discover the exact operations of their foes.

For a period of half an hour this state of suspense continued, until it grew to be more trying than actual exertion.

At length one of the rangers—a lithe-limbed, restless, sharp-eyed fellow—approached Captain Hale, with an eager, excited air, saying:

"This way, captain, if you please; I've made a discovery."

Moving quickly to the window from which the man had been making his observations, under the direction of his subordinate, Captain Hale looked searchingly out.

"Do you see anything there in the shadows?" asked the ranger.

Making no immediate reply, the commander continued to search the darkness with his eyes.

"Nothing," at length, he answered, "unless just beyond the main gate—"

"That's the quarter!" interrupted the ranger, as if now sure that he had not previously been mistaken.

"Unless just beyond the main gate—or the main entrance rather, for I swear the gate is gone!"

"You're right, captain."

"There's a shadowy something," resumed the other, speaking in a low, excited tone, "which wasn't there when twilight left us."

"And that something is nearer now than when I first saw it."

"Ah! and moving toward us still!"

"Exactly, captain,"

"Call Thompson and Barrett—yonder!" The commander pointed toward two riflemen, who stood near. At the intimation of their comrade they quickly came closer.

"Ready with your rifles, men," ordered the captain. "Aim just within the gateway, as our mark is now; you can all see something to shoot at there. Now!"

The simultaneous report of six rifles startled the other inmates of the Hall. A wild cry of rage and pain was heard without, still further adding to the alarm.

Without a word of explanation to those who came rushing excitedly to the room, the six men rapidly re-loaded their weapons to fire again. But at this moment a terrific discharge of bullets crashed through the window, and wild whoops and yells rang out. The volley was not harmless—Thompson fell dead, and two others who had entered were wounded. This was the first loss the little garrison had sustained, and the death of their comrade impressed them more terribly with a sense of the perils which must still be met.

Leaving others to remove the fallen men, Captain Hale and the surviving four gave their eager attention to matters outside, for a critical moment of the defence had arrived.

The mysterious mass or pile which had been discovered by the ranger—the meaning of which, however, was well understood by him and his companions who had seen it—still moved forward, without any visible propelling agency, and was steadily nearing the main door of the Hall. The volley that had been fired into it had only momentarily checked its approach.

It was a tall, bushy pile, pyramidical in form, broad enough at its base to hide if not protect the parties who were propelling it, and composed of a raft-like foundation, made of rails and light timbers, with a superstructure of dried brush and boughs, skillfully interlaced and of a very combustible nature. The evident design of the impatient enemy was to place this ingeniously contrived appliance of destruction close to the door of the Hall, and then to ignite it.

The danger was great and imminent, for if the flames were once started, though water could be thrown upon them from the windows above, the work would certainly cost the lives of some of the garrison. The besiegers would concentrate their fire at that point, and it would be death to appear at the windows.

A second discharge of bullets into the threatening mass was made by Captain Hale and those immediately with him, but to their dismay it still approached, and in another moment was out of range of their rifles—or rather it was too far *within* range, for they could reach it only by an exposure of their persons that would be madness. As it was, the gallant captain fell back, struck by a bullet, bleeding and senseless.

"He is killed!" cried several voices, in horror.

But in a brief period the wounded man, to the joy of his comrades, was on his feet again.

"Take my place," he said to Bates. "I am hurt, but not dead yet. I must see the surgeon, though, that's certain."

He reeled, and would have again fallen had not one of his companions caught him and supported him.

"Watch for the first gleam of fire," he called out, feebly but heroically, as he was led from the room. "Be ready with the water; use it even before the flames are started."

The disabling of their leader and the success so far of the enemy's design, caused momentary consternation to prevail. But a brave voice cried, "We'll fight to the last!" and the moment of panic passed.

The return of Captain Hale shortly after, faint and suffering as he was, diffused fresh spirit among the men. His very presence was inspiration.

The order to wet the dangerous pile below, as soon as it could be reached, so as to make it difficult of ignition, had not been lost upon his men. The window had been opened; and though ball after ball came hurtling in, and sometimes a whole volley, striking against walls and ceiling with terrifying thud, there were those present brave enough to essay the perilous work now necessary.

The first pail of water was thrown by Bates. Catching up the vessel containing the fluid, he reached daringly out of that gloomy portal of death, and dashed it upon the mass now close to the door of the Hall. It was a fearful venture, but the gallant ranger escaped with nothing more serious than a bullet through his hair.

"Hurrah!" shouted his exultant and admiring comrades. "That was well done! Honor to Bates!"

"There's more wanted. Who next tries it?" coolly said the noble fellow. "I'm ready to go again myself."

"No!" cried another heroic voice. "Here!" And its owner presented himself, bucket in hand—the forlornest forlorn hope that ever defied death; the forlornest we say, since the bullets from the foe now entered the apartment thicker than ever. A moment only the hero hesitated—hesitated, not through fear, but for a lull in the dreadful storm.

It came. Reaching out as his predecessor had done, he threw the extinguishing fluid upon the now lighted pile; for despite the attempt to prevent its ignition, the formidable mass had been fired.

Bates paid for his heroic act with his life; falling, not backward into the room, but outward and downward into the hands of the cruel foe.

An awful, horror-filled cry, burst from the lips of those who knew that he had thus perished. An answering, exulting shout was heard without.

But though he died, the gallant ranger gave not his life in vain. The fire that had already begun to crackle ominously, was dulled if not extinguished, only a flameless glow remaining. This would probably not of itself break out into a dangerous light, for the bushy pyre had now been pretty thoroughly dampened. Therefore, though deeply grieving for their comrade's loss, the survivors felt encouraged, even triumphant.

"How goes the defense in this quarter?" asked a voice at the door at this juncture, which every one recognized as Colonel Sayton's.

"Very good!" responded Captain Hale. "We have just lost Bates, however," he added sadly.

"That is bad. Is he quite dead?"

"Yes, and scalped by this time."

"Scalped!" echoed the veteran in amazement.

"He fell from the window as he was throwing water upon the flames," explained one.

"Merciful Heaven!" was the horrified ejaculation of the old soldier. "A man as brave as he deserved a better fate than that."

"He died doing his duty, Colonel."

"Yes, yes; none ever did it more gallantly; but it seems hard to lose him thus."

"How does Miss Seymour endure the excitement of the siege?" asked Captain Hale; and all present listened anxiously for the answer.

"Very well, I may say. Such as she are worth defending, men."

A cheer well expressed the general agreement with the colonel's sentiment.

"I must return to her and Mrs. Livingston to report progress, and then to my post," said the old officer, as he left the room.

Notwithstanding his age and infirmities, he had insisted upon sharing the dangers of the defence, as he had declared he would, and had only temporarily relieved himself from duty to ascertain the general situation of affairs in order to acquaint the two ladies with it afterward.

The vigilance of those of the garrison present had not been for an instant relaxed during his call, though no more water had been thrown—it not being thought necessary to continue that perilous work immediately.

It was hoped that their discomfiture would discourage the besiegers from further attempts to fire the Hall; but no feeling of certainty was indulged in on that score.

Again a silence fell upon the gloomy scene. Whoop of Indian and yell of tory no longer made hideous the outside night. Even the sharp rifle-shots that had punctuated the discordance ceased.

"More mischief is the meaning of that," remarked one.

"It takes silence to hatch a plot—and a devilish plan as well," said Captain Hale. "Something original in the way of vengeance may soon be looked for. Our enemies have abandoned their first plan, I think. It has cost them some lives, and, in view of the fact that they or their superiors—the regulars—are sure to get us if they will only wait a little, they don't feel like paying too big a price for us. They're fearfully exasperated by our resistance though, and if they were to reach us now, man, woman and child would perish. That thought doesn't make you feel much like giving up yet, does it, men?"

A variety of muttered expressions of determination, mingled with execrations, was the response to this.

"What *is* the meaning of this lull?" shortly repeated the captain, increasingly uneasy under the suspense of waiting.

As if in very answer to his words, a sharp flying gleam of fire shot athwart the open, avoided window, momentarily lighting up the apartment.

"Ah!" exclaimed the commander as if he instantly comprehended its meaning. Other expressions indicating a like understanding were heard from some of the rest.

"Burning arrows, is it? Quick, some of you to the roof!" A rush of footsteps followed.

"Spread the information, but keep every window guarded still," ordered Captain Hale to the few who remained. "Do you watch here, Wharton and I too will go."

He went from the room on a rapid tour of inspection and warning through the Hall, knowing that his immediate presence was not necessary in the garret.

Those who had hastened there, heard "tack" after "tack" of the fiery fall of arrows on the roof, and watched breathlessly to see if any of the blazing missiles communicated fire to the dry covering.

This was a mode of attack that the commander of the garrison had quite overlooked when he expressed his belief in their ability to hold out for the night.

Unfortunately the roof was very dry, and if the flames were communicated simultaneously at several points, the utmost exertions to extinguish them might prove unavailing.

From the windows below, the curving, meteor-like flight of the burning arrows was to be witnessed, filling the hearts of the beholders with new terror.

Water in quantities was carried to the upper portion of the Hall, even the women—such as were not incapacitated by fear—assisting in the labor.

With what a terrible anxiety those in the great gloomy garret watched for the entering points of flame!

They had barricaded the small windows at each end, to protect themselves from the bullets which the besiegers, anticipating the presence of their opponents in that part of the house, now poured in that direction; and there in the darkness which they feared would too soon be changed to destroying light, they stood ready to fight this new peril.

"Hark!" cried one.

"The roof has caught! God help us!" ejaculated another.

The light crisp crackling of burning shingles, tinder-dry, was indeed to be heard.

"The flame is through here! Quick, with the water!"

"And here!"

"And yonder!"

"Heaven aid us! The roof will soon be ablaze!"

The visible points of fire were quickly blackened by applications of water, only to enter elsewhere however.

All worked heroically, but the white look of despair began by the gaining light to show in their faces. The roar of the spreading flames was becoming appalling. Sparks and cinders began to drop from blazing rafters and cross-lathes, falling among rubbish almost as combustible as the roof itself.

"We are lost!" was the despairing cry of more than one, though all still struggled manfully.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A Terrible Alternative.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MAURICE F. EGAN.

I.

A MEETING.

The waves swelled softly on the beach, through the pure, clear air shone Vesuvius, veiled in graceful, floating clouds, bathed in sunlight. From a tiny boat on the glassy waters of the bay, came the sound of the fisherman's litany, and over every object hung the charm which the climate of Italy lends to a day in spring.

On a cliff overlooking the azure sea, with orange-trees shaking their blossomy white fingers over her head, and filling the air with perfume, reclined Grace Lindsay. Her glance wandered from point to point in the scene, enjoying each new delight, not hastily, but with a dreamy expression on her face that told of restful content. Grace Lindsay's face was not remarkable for beauty. It was a pale, quiet face, with just a hint of blush-rose color in the cheeks; but its luminous blue eyes, dark or light according to the varying emotions of their owner, redeemed it from the reproach either of plainness or prettiness—the latter usually meaning color and insipidity.

An unopened book lay near her, and a sheet of music from which she had been practising an aria, had fallen from her hand. A nightingale in the neighboring thicket had taken up the trill that she had forgotten, and was now making the air quiver with melody.

But Grace's serene enjoyment was destined to be rudely disturbed. She heard an exclamation, and the sound of scrambling. Turning round she saw a man descending the face of the cliff above her with more haste than dignity, lowering himself by means of the tangled vine-branches.

He was a young man dressed in gray, with a good-humored face. Grace started to her feet and watched his descent.

"I beg pardon, Signorina, for interrupting your pleasure," he began, hat in hand, and Grace decided at once that he was not an Italian, "but this truant sketch which the breeze blew over the cliff must be my excuse."

Grace noticed for the first time that a square of white paper had fallen near her. She stooped, before the young man could interfere, and picked it up.

"You might have saved yourself this trouble," she said in English, "as, if you had called, I would have restored it to you."

The young man colored slightly. That was just what he wished to avoid. In returning the sketch, Grace accidentally turned it over, and looking at it, stood transfixed. She beheld the cliff, the orange-trees, and herself transferred to paper.

The situation was rather awkward for both parties. The intruder gnawed his light moustache nervously, and looked embarrassed. Grace was rather flattered, but then she felt it her duty to punish the artist's impudence.

"This is intended for a counterfeit presentment of myself," she said, coldly, "and it is a very ungentlemanly action to attempt to steal a lady's portrait; in this instance, however, you have not succeeded, as the sketch would do just as well for anybody else."

The artist smiled a little, divining her motive. The sketch was capital, and he knew it.

"You are right," he observed, "in your criticism, but wrong in the inference that the sketch was intended for yourself."

Grace grew indignant. Did he think she would believe such a palpable falsehood? But then she herself had admitted that it might represent anybody else. She was caught in her own net. She raised her eyes, and saw an expression of amusement passing over the face of her companion. He laughed, and, although angry with herself for yielding to the impulse, she joined in the laugh.

"I have done wrong, I admit," he said, with an air of mock penitence, "but the temptation was irresistible, and as the picture is nearly finished, I hope you will reseat yourself, and allow me to complete it."

Audacious wretch! Grace drew herself up haughtily, and prepared to utter a freezing negative, when something in the young man's countenance struck her as familiar. She stared at him in a very unladylike manner.

"Is it possible? Can it be my old friend Bernard Wharton?"

"Himself and no other. But excuse me if I fail to recognize—"

"Grace Lindsay!"

There was a hand-shaking, followed by a flood of questions about mutual friends. These two had not met for years—since childhood, perhaps; had the meeting taken place at home it would have been less cordial, but in a foreign land one sees a friend in every compatriot.

"And your father, Grace, is he here?" asked Bernard Wharton.

And tears blinded Grace for an instant, and she answered simply, "He is dead. I am all alone now. Ah, Bernard, I am no longer the petted heiress you once knew. Do you remember how poor, dear Aunt Madge used to give way to my whims?"

"Dear Aunt Madge! She took me—an orphan boy—the son of a stranger, and gave me all I possess—an education. What a charming little fairy you were, Grace! But with whom did you come to Italy?"

"I came alone, and thereby hangs a tale—a sad one for me. Three years ago my father died. He was accounted wealthy, as you know, but after his death there was not sufficient to pay his creditors. Well, I had some musical talent, which had been cultivated, and, people said, a fine voice, so I resolved to earn my own living, and besides that, to become a great singer. I worked hard. Through the influence of friends my music pupils increased in number, and in two years by close economy, I saved money enough to bring me to Italy. Here I am in Sorrento. My maestro lives in yonder villa, and he tells me that if I attend to his instructions another year, I will be certain to secure an engagement at La Scala the following season. That is all.

Bernard Wharton gazed at her in admiration. He could well appreciate the strength of mind and unfaltering perseverance that would enable a young girl to overcome all obstacles in the pursuit of such an end.

"I am an artist," he said, "domiciled at Naples. My friend Howard and I are over here sketching. He's up there among the olives, reading a novel. I say Bert! Come down, and be introduced to a young lady!"

This loud-voiced invitation was followed by an indistinct muttering in the thicket, the burden of which sounded very much like, "Bother the young lady!"

Grace, however, appeared discreetly unconscious of the unseen one's want of gallantry. After a short delay, the handsomest man she had ever seen emerged from the olive trees. This was Hubert Howard, as Grace discovered by the introduction which followed.

Hubert Howard was unusually tall, with very broad shoulders, and a well-proportioned figure. His features were regular, his complexion bordering on olive, with the glow of health shining through. His hair was dark, and his eyes expressed nothing but what their owner desired.

Howard bowed to Grace, and became at once brilliant and deferential. He spoke little, but everything he said bore the impress of thought. He was a complete contrast to his blithe, thoughtless friend.

The two accompanied Grace up to the villa. At the entrance she was met by a bare-footed, little Italian boy.

"Well, Guiseppe?" she said.

"The English gentleman, Signorina," said the boy, looking curiously at Grace's two companions. "He is ill again."

"I will go immediately, Guiseppe."

With a smiling nod to her cavaliers, Grace turned down the path leading to the sea.

"Who is the 'English gentleman?'" asked Bernard Wharton.

"Il Signore Mansfield," returned the Italian boy, with a look that said plainly, "Is it your affair?"

"Is he young or old?"

"Old," briefly returned Guiseppe, scampering after Grace.

Bernard looked relieved.

"Mansfield—the miser, as the people here call him. Importunate must be the beggar that gets a grain from him!" said Howard. His parsimony is proverbial. He lives in a small cabin, well bolted and barred, with his little imp of a servant."

"You know more about the inhabitants of the place than I gave you credit for," said Bernard, indifferently.

"I am thinking of coming here to stay," returned Howard, puffing a cloud of smoke from his cigar into the "sun-painted air." "Is Miss Lindsay wealthy? I think I heard you say that she was an heiress."

"She was, but is not now. She's a charming girl, Bert. But I vote that we move to Sorrento. The scenery is exquisite."

"And you never admired landscape without human figures," said his companion, dryly.

Bernard tried to frown, but half smiled in spite of himself, and thought, "How deuced sharp Howard is."

When Hubert Howard reached Naples, he found a letter awaiting him. It was from the head of a New York firm with which he had been connected. Among other things was the following:

"Exposure can be no longer delayed. Your father has so far succeeded in hushing the matter up, but now all will be disclosed unless you can refund the money you embezzled. You may think 'embezzled' a hard word, but in risking our money in a fraudulent speculation, you certainly did a dishonest thing, to which the word fittingly applies. I repeat—refund what you have taken, and we will receive you on your old footing; if you do not, the law will take its course."

Hubert Howard grew deadly pale. He paced up and down the room for hours, lost in thought.

The next morning he said to Bernard Wharton, while a hard, strange look swept over his countenance:

"Let us have our traps moved to Sorrento as soon as possible."

They went to Sorrento—Hubert to lounge and plan, while Bernard painted and strolled with Grace Lindsay.

Mr. Mansfield was an eccentric Englishman, who resided in a small cot on the beach. He had every appearance of extreme poverty, but it was whispered that he possessed immense wealth; however that might be, no one but Grace and his small servant, Guiseppe, was ever allowed to cross his threshold. Grace was thus favored because he thought that she believed in his poverty, and therefore expected nothing for the womanly services she rendered to him. In her visits to his cabin, Bernard Wharton often accompanied her, but he was never admitted by the suspicious old man.

During these sweet days, bright with sunshine and redolent with perfume, Bernard Wharton learned to love Grace Lindsay; but when he told his love, Grace said:

"Wait. You are a poor artist; I am a poor singer. When I shall have obtained the laurels of a prima donna, I will lay them at your feet; then you may give me orange-blossoms in return."

It was in vain he argued. Grace was inexorable; she would not marry a poor man.

II.

A FALSE FRIEND.

The waves softly dashing on the shore, made the only sound that broke the calm stillness of the night. The moonlight shimmered down through the wax-like leaves of the ivy that curtained the window of Mr. Mansfield's cabin, and fell upon little Guiseppe's face. He usually slept just beneath the widow.

There was a slight, grating sound. The huge bar which crossed the window came apart in the middle, and a man without, cautiously raised the sash. He placed one foot upon the sill, drew the other after it, stooped for an instant, and lightly stepping over the sleeping Guiseppe, entered the room. This was done with very little noise, but it was sufficient to awaken the boy. He sprung from his couch, uttering an exclamation. A bright stiletto flashed in the white light of the moon. Guiseppe groaned, and was flung violently against the opposite wall, falling to the floor an inert mass. Life seemed crushed out of him.

"Guiseppe, what noise is that? What is the matter?" called the weak, tremulous voice of Mr. Mansfield, from the room above.

The intruder, drawing his cloak around him, stole stealthily up-stairs. Mr. Mansfield had not gone to bed. He sat at a small table, reading. The rays from his lamp fell upon his thin gray hairs, and struck the brass plating of a small chest which stood near. Mr. Mansfield sat with his back to the door. The other objects in the room were in partial obscurity, but the intruder seemed to know every turn in the dark staircase, and every piece of furniture in his way. He made no sound. The old man raised his head from the book and turned to continue his questions to Guiseppe. The stiletto a second time descended silently. The words froze in the old man's throat. He never spoke again.

The murderer seized the lamp, and by its light examined every portion of the room. He found nothing of value. Taking the steel-plated chest in his hands, he rapidly retraced his steps, and soon gained the outside of the cabin. He hesitated a moment, apparently undecided which path to pursue. Encumbered with the chest, he could no longer hold his cloak before his face. The tell-tale moonbeams showed the countenance of Hubert Howard.

He took his way toward the Massoria, or farm house, where he lodged. Alone in his room, he burst open the chest. His face lighted up at the sight of a few gold coins in a net purse on top of its contents. He emptied it upon the floor. Papers—deeds—paid checks—receipts lay before him. He glanced over them, one by one, with feverish eagerness. Only papers—some doubtless of value to Mr. Mansfield, but all worthless to their present owner. And for these he had blotted out two lives, and murdered his own soul! He grew livid with unavailing rage. He paced the floor like a caged tiger. He gathered up the mass of papers with the intention of burning them, when a recently-dated sheet of foolscap attracted his attention. It was headed, "Synopsis of my last Will and Testament, sent by mail to Messrs. Wilton & Soame, Solicitors, London, May 6, 18—."

Howard ran his eye over it carelessly. Suddenly an expression of surprise and deep interest overspread his face. He read the following words:

"To a young American lady, now residing in Sorrento, who by her kind and disinterested attentions to an unknown, feeble old man, has earned my deepest gratitude, I bequeath the bulk of my estate, real and personal, situated in England or elsewhere; that is, on condition that the young lady, Miss Grace Lindsay, marries within this current year. She is young, inexperienced, good-looking and alone; she should therefore have a protector, and I have no doubt that when the provisions of my will are made known, she will have a numerous train of suitors from which to choose."

This was followed by various directions relating to investments, &c. With the paper in his hand, he seated himself near the window, a dangerous light shining in his eyes. He looked out on the serene night—all his features seemed drawn into a new and baleful look of determination.

"I must have the money," he said. "Everything must give way—friendship—bah!—I was never his friend. He's a hot-headed, impetuous fool, but he loves her. Well, love shall also give way."

Murmuring his broken thoughts, he saw the gray light of morn breaking in the east. He changed his clothes, and cleansed the stained poniard. Shudderingly and with averted eyes he hid the weapon. Then he awaited the day.

Grace Lindsay was at breakfast when she heard the news of the murder. She had really liked the peculiar old man, and the tidings filled her with grief and horror. She inquired after Guiseppe, and learned that his relatives had removed him. Sorrento was thrown into a fever of excitement by the occurrence. No one in particular was suspected. Mr. Mansfield had been entirely inoffensive; and when an Italian uses his stiletto, revenge is usually the motive, avarice very seldom, so there was no one on whom suspicion could fall.

While the excited padrona of Grace's apartments was pouring forth the much-embellished details of the murder, Hubert Howard was announced.

He came in with pallid face and bloodshot eyes. He did not address Grace until the padrona had left the room, to pour forth her stream of gossip elsewhere.

"Pardon this intrusion, Miss Lindsay, but I have something of the greatest importance to communicate. There was a murder committed last night."

"I know it," returned Grace, gravely; "poor old man!"

"And I know the murderer," said Howard, abruptly, speaking in English.

Grace started. There was something menacing and significant in his tone.

"Shall I whisper his name?" he continued.

Grace made a movement as if to leave the apartment, saying haughtily, "In what does this concern me, sir? If you are acquainted with the assassin, you had better reveal his name to the proper authorities."

"Stay—one moment! Suppose that I should say that Bernard Wharton murdered old Mansfield!"

Grace turned in astonishment. Then her face and neck crimsoned with indignation. "I should tell you that you lied, sir; and I would bring Bernard Wharton to face you, and to prove the lie!"

Howard was silent. He admired Grace involuntarily. In her wrath she was positively beautiful, and this feeling of admiration made him more eager to consummate his plot.

"I accuse Bernard Wharton of this murder!"

"Yes—but not to his face," said Grace, scornfully. "I will send for him. It is but just that he should be summoned to meet this charge, although it could only have originated in the brain of a madman."

"Summon him, and let him appear, if he will! Do you know, Grace Lindsay, that he has fled from the consequence of his crime?"

The truth was that Bernard Wharton had received a message from Rome early in the preceding night, urging his instant departure for that city. This message was obscurely worded, and Bernard had showed it to Howard, asking his advice. The latter had many plausible reasons to offer to prove that it should be answered in person at once, so Bernard had started in hot haste, leaving the field clear for his false friend.

"Fled! I do not believe it!" cried Grace.

"I repeat that he has fled. I saw Bernard Wharton murder that old man and his servant. I was the only witness to the foul deed, and now I go to denounce him to 'the proper authorities,' as you bade me."

The man spoke these words with perfect coolness and self-possession. Grace's heart sank; but her faith in Bernard Wharton was very strong.

"Do not go yet," she said. "Do you not see that your accusation is absurd? Bernard Wharton had no motive to lead to the commission of such a crime."

"Listen!" He spoke with fearful distinctness. Each word fell like a drop of molten lead on the heart of his listener. "He wanted money. Without money he could not marry you. He told me himself that you were ambitious, and that you refused to become his wife while you and he were poor. Mr. Mansfield, people said, had money—"

"Stop! This is terrible! I shall go mad!" she groaned.

"My duty is plain," continued Howard, unheeding her, "I was his friend, but by this act he has forfeited all claim to friendship. Good-morning, Miss Lindsay."

"Save him, Mr. Howard!" cried Grace, grasping his arm in her despair. "By your friendship for him, have mercy! Remember that one day you yourself will plead for mercy before a Heavenly Judge? Keep this crime a secret in your breast, I implore you! The disclosure will do no good; no one else is accused of the murder."

"The investigation has not been concluded, and justice—"

"Mercy has greater claims than justice! Do not go to doom him!" she implored, sobbing, as Howard moved toward the door.

"I will swear never to reveal this crime on one condition."

"And what is that? If it is in my power, it is granted at once. Speak?"

"On condition that you become my wife."

Grace started back, and gazed at him in frightened wonder.

"This is the only alternative," he said sternly. "If you refuse, I will immediately name the criminal to the magistrates. I will give you half an hour in which to think of my proposition. At the end of that time, I will return for your answer."

Grace buried her tear-stained face in her hands. Howard went out. Grace could not think; she could only moan in anguish; head and heart throbbed wildly. She aroused herself. Perhaps Bernard was still in Sorrento—perhaps Howard had lied. She threw on a mantle, and ran swiftly along the path by the sea to the Messeria, where he had lodged. The contadina confirmed Howard's story. The signore had left her house; at what time he had gone she did not know. Probably that morning at an early hour—certainly before breakfast; but the signore's American friend could tell without doubt.

Almost despairing, she returned to her sitting-room, and, kneeling down, prayed to be delivered from this terrible alternative. She had hardly regained her feet when Hubert Howard entered.

"Your answer?" he said, briefly.

Grace raised her eyes imploringly, and then lowered them, shuddering.

"I consent to marry you."

"The ceremony must be performed at once, and then we start for home—for New York. We will go now to find a priest."

Grace saw that appeal would be useless. She called the padrona, and asked her to be her companion—her bridesmaid, she said, bitterly. The honest padrona rolled up her eyes in amazement, but consented.

Grace took Howard's arm in silence. They walked through the blinding sunlight in the street.

Suddenly there rung out a loud, thrilling cry. A small figure with a bandaged head sprung from an arched doorway. It was Guiseppe. He sprang at Hubert Howard's throat, and clung there with the grasp of a young panther, uttering his wild cry of vengeance. He had recognized his master's murderer. Howard struggled; a tall soldier seized his arm; a crowd gathered. Escape was hopeless. They led him toward the prison. And Grace fell fainting in the arms of the padrona.

In a few days Bernard Wharton returned to Sorrento. To discover that his friend was accused of murder, was a great shock; but when he heard the full extent of his villainy and the fate that Grace had escaped, he wondered how he could ever have esteemed the man—for a week before, he would have trusted Hubert Howard with his life.

Guiseppe had been but slightly wounded by the murderer's stiletto, but was stunned the blow against the wall. Guiseppe testified against Howard, who was condemned to death; but through the carelessness of the prison officials he escaped, and was drowned on the bay, while attempting to reach a point on the coast by swimming.

Bernard Wharton did not find it very hard to forgive Grace's want of faith in him.

"I'm afraid some obstacle may separate us, Bernard," said Grace, coloring shyly, "and I've come to the conclusion that it is better to marry a poor man than not to marry at all."

They were married in Sorrento. It was not until months afterwards that he knew he had married Mr. Mansfield's heiress.

Grace Lindsay did not become a great prima donna, but she became something infinitely more useful—a good wife.

A Startling Exception.

A recent medical writer says: "Sleep whenever you can; in the cars—anywhere, when you get a chance—the great want of the age is sleep." This is not always safe advice to follow, as a Lawrence gentleman knows to his sorrow. He was recently afflicted with a bad cold, and to cure himself of it resorted to the method of bathing his feet in warm water and drinking a tumblerful of gin and molasses, prescribed by an aged and respected friend of the family. Having got everything in order for carrying out the prescription, he sat down by the stove, his pedal extremities immersed in hot water, a tumbler of smoking gin and molasses by his side. In this condition a sense of enjoyment stole over him as he sipped the exhilarating liquid, and he fell asleep. His wife had gone to bed, and on awakening about three o'clock in the morning wondered why she was alone. Going down stairs, she was horrified to find her liege lord asleep in his chair, the fire out, his feet still immersed in the water, over which a cake of ice was formed, and an empty tumbler on the chair beside him. His cold isn't a bit better.

Brigham Young.

A writer says: A large oil-painting of the prophet is carefully preserved in Brigham Young's reception-room in Salt Lake City. No malicious reports of his enemies are so damning to Smith's character as that portrait. The face is large, the eyes big, watery and prominent; the cheeks puffy, the under lip long, the lips thick and sensual. The chin is small; the cheek-bones are unpleasantly prominent; the forehead recedes in a fashion scarcely human. The prophet has long, brown hair, straight, and lumped at the ears. He wears a high collar, with a redundant white neckcloth. The whole appearance of the head—bulky, awkward, ill-set, with bulbous eyes and horridly-retreating forehead—is abnormal, and repulsive in the extreme. A conviction seizes irresistibly on the spectator that it must be the head of a criminal or of an idiot. No believer in the prophet should be suffered to see that painting.

A Smile.

"Don't you find this work very tiresome and thankless?" was asked of a stalwart and handsome member of the Broadway squad, whose duty it is to guide timid persons across the great thoroughfare. "Oh, no," he cheerily replied; "we occasionally get a smile from some pretty miss which repays us for an hour of hard work, and dozens of cross words." And then he dodged off to the side of a young lady, whom he escorted over the perilous cross-walks, and as she gave him a grateful smile on parting he was doubtless happy for the next hour.

☞ A very wealthy farmer of Titusville had this "notis" posted up in his field: "If any man's or woman's cows or oxen gits in this here oats, his or her tail will be cut off, as the case may be."

A COOL HAND.

A glorious summer evening in Lower Egypt, with the last glow of sunset dying away from the minarets of Cairo and the clustering towers of Mehemet Ali's citadel; a broad, shadowy, far-extending colonnade, skirting a basket of broad-leaved tropical plants, rich in all the splendor of southern coloring; a man pacing restlessly to and fro, looking at his watch about twice every five minutes. The colonnade in question is the piazza of the Hotel du Nil; the man is its latest arrived guest—myself.

To be kept waiting for dinner is notoriously the one injury which no man can forgive; but when one has travelled all night, climbed the Great Pyramid in the morning, and tramped all round Cairo in the afternoon, the infliction becomes simply unendurable. Yonder, at the upper end of the colonnade, stands the long table, with its hanging lamps and full-dinner paraphernalia; but not a sign of food as yet. I am just beginning to work myself into a highly American and patriotic rage (such things, of course, never happening at home), when a man approaches me from behind, and says in fluent Italian, though with a foreign accent: "Can you oblige me with a light for my cigar?"

The voice is one which, once heard, is not easily forgotten. I seize the new-comer by both wrists (to his no small amazement), and drag him to the light. The moment our faces become visible, there is a simultaneous shout:

"The Stoic, sure enough."

"Old Diogenes, by Jove!"

In this wise do I and my old college chum, Montacute Hardy, meet once more. Since we shook hands in Philadelphia, three years ago—he heading westward, and I eastward, on the course of travel which has proved much longer, and infinitely more adventurous, than either of us foresaw—we have had no word of each other; and I am startled to note that the long wanderings and strange adventures which have altered me almost beyond recognition, and made me feel as though I had lived twenty lives in one, have left my old companion just as I remember him in the days of lectures and wine-parties. The same "thoroughbred" look from head to heel; the same slight, elastic figure; the same quiet, thoughtful, delicate face; and, above all, the same wonderful composure, which the maddest excitement of a boat-race, or the hottest fury of a college scrimmage had never once disturbed. The venerable head of our college had once commended Hardy as "an admirable realization of the ideal Stoic;" and the name, catching the fancy of the undergraduates, speedily became universal. His own name, however, would have described him quite as accurately; for in sheer imperviousness to every extreme of fatigue and exposure, the burliest athlete of the University might have yielded to the slender little man who now stands beside me, smoothing his trim moustache with a hand small and shapely as a young girl's.

I am about to burst into a volley of questions; but Hardy stops me short:

"You know the old proverb: 'It's ill talk between a full man and a fasting;' and between *two* fasting men, in my opinion, it is still worse. Here come those lazy beggars with the dinner at last, thank goodness; so let us eat first, and talk after."

We do so, and to good purpose. The meal over and the guests dispersed, Hardy draws his chair out into the open, lights a cigar such as only *he* has the gift of picking up, and laughs heartily at my refusal of his offered case.

"Still as great a heathen as ever, eh? I remember we used to chaff you about your non-appreciation of liquor and 'baccy; but I thought all this wandering would have cured you. Well, mix yourself another glass of lemonade, and I'll tell you how I paid an hotel bill in California."

"Come, come, old fellow!" remonstrated I, "it's giving yourself rather a bad character, to pick out, as the most wonderful event of your whole travels, that you paid an hotel bill!"

"Wait till you've heard the story," answered the imperturbable Hardy, "there are more ways than one of paying a bill, as you, who are University man, ought to know. Have you put enough lemon in? Well then—curtain rises, disclosing Mr. Montacute Hardy in one of the worst parts of the Sierra Nevadas, bruised and stiff from a fall he has received while endeavoring to get a rare plant from a precipitous bank; with four dollars in his pocket, and only his knife if he gets into trouble, for the lock of his revolver has been broken in the fall."

I was half dead with my bruises and fatigue, together, but there was nothing to be gained by standing still, so I hobbled along anyhow, and got on pretty well after a bit; though, just at first, I felt as shaky as if I'd been going up for my degree exam. over again. Just about sundown I came to a hut, whose only tenants seemed to be a tall, gaunt, vicious-looking Yankee, and just about the ugliest darkey I ever saw in my life.

"'Good evening, mate,' said I; 'can you put a fellow up for to-night? I don't feel like going much farther, somehow.'

"'Kin yew *pay* for it?—that's the idee!' said my host, with a grin. 'Yew don't *look* like as yew hed made yure pile, thet's a fact!'

"It was my weakness in those days (I've got over it now) to be always riled by that kind of thing. I whipped out my pouch, and slapped it down on the table; and with all the small change in it, it made a very tolerable jingle. I saw the fellow's eyes light up, and I knew directly that I'd done wrong. You've been in the interior of Russia, and you'll know how a wolf's eyes gleam when he comes at you in good earnest. That's just the look I saw on that fellow's face then—and on the darkey's too, for that matter.

"'Good as pork, mister,' said he, nodding at the pouch. 'Guess yew'll be fur a bite 'fore gwine to roost; jist hold on a minnit, and we'll fix for supper right away.'

"'All right,' answered I; 'I'll just look round outside to see if there are any plants worth picking up, while you get ready.'

"This was a bit of diplomacy on my part; for I knew that, if they meant mischief, they'd lay their heads together the moment my back was turned, and I wanted to make sure. As soon as they had gone into the hut again, I sneaked round to the back, and crouched behind the wood-pile, where I could hear every word they said. And, sure enough, in a minute or two they began:

"'Trapped our b'ar this time—eh, Pomp?'

"'Dat so, boss, sure 'nuff. He big fool, shew money to all man he meet!'

"'He a bin and shewed it jist once too often—so he has! Guess he's one o' them diggers who make a big pile, and then try to keep it dark by riggin' out like scarecrows, and lookin' down on their luck. But he can't throw dust in *my* eyes, that's what he can't! Pomp, jist take yure axe, and get ahint the door, and when stranger comes back, fetch him down from behind, while I give him the bowie in front!'

"'Eh, boss, what for such big hurry? Wait little bit, better do.'

"'Why, yew black coward! air yew 'feared of a little grasshopper like *thet?*'

"'Me no coward—you sabbee dat bery well,' answered the black sulkily; 'but what for make noise, make mess, when can do quietly? You 'member what bobbery dem Mariposa feller make, when dey see blood on de floor? Look see! you gib him plenty much drink—he go sleep sound—*den* we do job! So I do wid digger feller 'way down in Sacramento.'

"'Right yew air, Pomp—guess thet's how we'll fix it. Just fotch out the whisky, now, while I go and see if stranger's anywhar roun'.'

"But I didn't wait for him to come out, but went round, and came along toward the door of the shanty, whistling as jollily as could be, that he might not smell a rat. I knew all I wanted to know; and, as I was too tired to have any chance of running, I concluded that my best way would be just to kill them both!"

I looked down at the narrator with involuntary admiration. The idea of this dainty little butterfly, whom a puff of wind might almost blow away, calmly measuring himself against two powerful cut-throats in a lonely mountain gully, and concluding that his best way was to kill them both, as coolly as one might speak of crushing a couple of cockroaches, had really a heroic flavor about it.

"'At supper,' he continued, 'I was quite jolly with them, and chaffed and told them stories till they were fit to crack their sides with laughing; but I took care to get very sleepy before long, and the two, who were watching me out of the corners of their eyes, exchanged looks as they noticed it.

"'Guess yew feel like havin' a big sleep, stranger, said my considerate host; 'so I'll jist shew yew yare clearin', and then yew kin take out all the sleep yew hev lost at one pull.' He took me up a ladder into a small loft, showed me some straw and a big horse-rug, and marched off.

"'Here, then, was the situation. The ladder was fast to the door-sill, so I could not cut off their communications; and if I showed fight openly, they would most likely get the best of it, especially if—as I half suspected—they had firearms. The only way was to trap them—but how? Just at that moment (never tell me again that novel-reading's of no use) I recollected that bit in The Cloister and the Hearth where Gerard and Denys hold their room in the Burgundian inn against the robbers, hiding behind the door, and sticking them one by one as they came in. I resolved to try the same dodge; and I set to work to dress up a dummy with the straw and the horse-rug—fitting my cap and boots on it to make it more life-like—so as to look as if I were lying asleep in the farther corner. (When they used to think me a dab at rigging up lay-figures for the college theatricals, I little dreamed to what a use I should one day put it!) Then, when all was ready, I slipped behind the door with my bowie-knife, and waited.

"'If I were a Frenchman, now—say one of Dumas' Mousquetaires—I should tell you that I puffed a cigarette quite comfortably, and hummed an opera air between the whiffs. As I happen to be an American, I may as well own that I wouldn't go over that half-hour again for more than I can say. If they had come at once, it would have been nothing; but the *waiting*—ugh! One minute, I'd think there was some one behind me, and set my back hard against the wall; the next minute a hand seemed to be coming through the wall itself, with a knife in it, right at me. Then it seemed as if all the air were full of knives and hatchets, ready to go into me if I stirred an inch; and once, when a straw pricked my bare foot, I was within an ace of screaming out. The wretches in the room below were still as death, listening for any sound from above; and in that dead silence, the ticking of the old clock pricked my ears like a pin. At last—just as I was thinking of rushing down upon them and having it over anyhow—I heard the ladder creak; creak again, louder—creak again, louder still—and then the Yankee's long, lean, wolfish face rose above the door-sill, peering about with a light. Seeing me (as he thought) fast asleep on the floor, he crawled up and stepped forward to strike, offering his back fair toward me. Like a flash my knife was down on the back of his neck, with such a lick that the blade came clear out under his chin, and he died without a sound. I had barely time to drop him on the straw, when the darkey (who, from first to last, didn't seem very game, and had contrived to hang back a little) came tumbling up—thinking, I suppose, that his master had done the trick, and meant to nail all the plunder himself. I struck him hurriedly, like a fool, as I was—and of course hurt instead of killing him. The next moment he had me fast. Down dropped the knife, and over we went upon the floor fighting like wild-cats. And then began as fine a tussle as ever was fought out in a lonely place at midnight, with life for the stake, a corpse for umpire, and the moon for looker-on. Over and over we rolled, he gnashing his teeth and snarling like a wild beast, while the cold moonlight came streaming in through the little window upon the black's savage face, and the trampled straw, and the dead man's distorted features and grinning teeth, gaping wide with the gasp of his last agony. If Blacky hadn't been weakened by the flowing of the blood from his wound, he'd have finished me in no time; as it was, he was a tough customer. I began to think that I was in for it, at last, when suddenly I felt the knife on the floor beside me. I gave him one tremendous squeeze, just to numb him for a moment, and seized it. The next moment, plug! it went into him, up to the very handle. He gave one choking growl, and lay dead.

"'Having thus "accounted for the population," I began to debate whether I was justified in making prize of their belongings, in virtue of their recent nefarious attempt and my own forlorn condition. In this difficulty, my studies in light literature came to my aid once more. I recollected how Gaffer Herum shut up Rogue Riderhood by telling him that "you *can't* rob a dead man;" fortified by which great authority, I went down-stairs, and proceeded to help myself to my late host's effects. I took what little money I could find, a gun, and some ammunition, filled my haversack with cold pork and "hard tack," and then lay down before the fire and fell asleep.

"'What! with the two bodies just overhead?" asked I, confounded at this fresh proof of his extraordinary coolness.

"'Why not?" asked the Stoic, simply. "Well, next morning at sunrise, under those improved conditions, I started again. After a bit, I fell in with a digger going West, and we kept together as far as Sacramento. I didn't say anything about my adventure, however; and a few days later, I was rather tickled at hearing a man astonishing one of the drinking-bars with a story of how he had found 'a white man and and a negro rubbed out in one of the shanties on the Digger Trail, and he guessed the Injuns as done it hed bin stampeded in the middle o' their work, for they hadn't sculped nary one on 'em, though the negro hed as fine a crop o' wool as ever growed.'

"'So know, my boy, that's how I paid my hotel bill—as light a one as I ever came across. Two strokes receipted it—only of a knife instead of a pen. Now, then, what do' you say to some coffee before turning in?'

☞ They are now utilizing black walnut trees by tapping them and converting the sap into a syrup for the table. This will necessitate buckwheat cakes with black walnut trimmings.

MISS SABRINA'S MISTAKE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

Miss Sabrina Lathrop was meandering slowly down toward the village one Monday morning with her "all-seeing" eyes on the alert, and her ears wide open.

Miss Sabrina was the chief tattler of the many tattlers of Hubbubtown. If there was anything going on she knew all about it. She always managed to have something to do and say in every neighborhood difficulty, and was evidently proud of the fame she had acquired for miles around as one of the most inveterate gossips ever known.

"Miss Lane don't git her washin' out very early," said Miss Sabrina to herself, as she came within sight of a pretty white farm-house where a woman was hanging out clothes to dry. "Seems to me if *I* kep' a hired girl I could git around in some kind o' season. There's the hired girl a hangin' out the clothes now. Embr'idered skirts an' ruffled piller-cases! Humph!" and here Miss Sabrina gave her nose an upward turn. "If Miss Lane was savin' an' equinomical, as she'd orter be, an' as willin' to put her mind onto sensible work as she is to putter over ruffles and sich nonsense, she might git along 'thout a hired girl, just as well as not."

Miss Sabrina slackened her pace, as she neared the house, in order to take observations of what was going on.

"Seems as of the hired girl must be afeared o' takin' cold," thought Miss Sabrina, as she came nearer the clothes-yard. "She's got her sun bonnit on, an' a shawl."

Just then Mr. Lane came out of the house, bringing a basket of newly-washed clothes.

"I declare," exclaimed Miss Sabrina, in surprise. "Keeps a hired girl, Miss Lane does, and then has to have her husband help do the washin'! It's a shame!"

The woman who was hanging out clothes kept her back to Miss Sabrina, and Mr. Lane did not see her as she walked by very slowly, watching the house and them as if they had been unsuspecting mice, and she a cat waiting to gobble them up.

"My gracious me!"

Miss Sabrina gave utterance to the exclamation as if she had been a pop-gun and the words had been fired off. She was so excited at what she saw that she grabbed hold of the picket-fence to steady herself.

"My land o' goodness! If Mr. Lane didn't up an' kiss that hired girl!"

Miss Sabrina could hardly believe her eyes, and stood for a minute or two staring at the man who had committed such a horrible offence. And as she stood there, he repeated the action, and got in return a playful slap on the ear.

Miss Sabrina had never received such a shock before. She had actually seen Mr. Lane, a member of the Baptist church in Hubbubtown, in full standing, kiss his hired girl. She, Miss Sabrina Lathrop, had seen all this!

"I wouldn't have believed it if anybody had a told me," she exclaimed as she started on. Mr. Lane and the hired girl had gone in, therefore there was nothing more for her to see. "I wouldn't have believed it; and yet it's *so!*"

Miss Sabrina felt that a great responsibility rested upon her shoulders. Everybody in Hubbubtown considered Mr. Lane to be a good and upright young man. She had so considered him until now. Now, however, her eyes were opened as to his real character, and she felt it to be a duty incumbent upon her to open the eyes of other people.

"He's a wolf in sheep's clothing," said Miss Sabrina, shaking her head sadly, as she hurried on. "An' I'm a-goin' to do my duty as a church member, an' expose him to the world. I wonder if poor Miss Lane knows about his carryin' on. Ten chances to one she don't dream on't! Poor creetur! I wonder if it's my duty to warn her o' her husband's iniquity? She'd *o'rter* know it!"

By this time Miss Sabrina had reached Deacon Carpenter's, and she felt it to be her duty to stop in and tell them what she had seen. Some action ought to be taken on the matter at once, she concluded. It would never do to keep such hypocrites as Mr. Lane in the church,—*never!*

"What can it be about, John?"

Mrs. Lane leaned over her husband's shoulder, and read the note again. It was from the officers of the Baptist Church of Hubbubtown, notifying him that certain complaints against his moral character had been made, and that he would be expected to be present at a church meeting on the next afternoon, to answer to them.

"I haven't the least idea what is referred to," he said, thoughtfully, as he laid the letter down. "I have done nothing wrong, that I am aware of. It must be that some mistake has been made. However, I shall go down and see about it to-morrow."

"And I'm going with you," said Mrs. Lane.

And on the afternoon of the next day, Mr. and Mrs. Lane went down to Hubbubtown Baptist Church together, to find out what the matter was.

The officers of the church and most of the members had assembled when the offending party made his appearance. Miss Sabrina was there, strong in her sense of "duty," and looking as jubilant as if she had brought the greatest criminal the world ever heard of to justice. The whole affair had afforded her more satisfaction for the past week than the discovery of a gold mine would have done.

"I should think he'd be ashamed to show his face among the brethering an' sisters he's deceived so," whispered Miss Sabrina to Mrs. Deacon Carpenter.

"I'm sorry to see Miss Lane here," returned Mrs. Deacon Carpenter, without expressing the least sorrow in her face, however. "Poor thing! If she don't know about it, how she will feel, won't she?"

"Feel?" said Miss Sabrina, feelingly. "You're right, Miss Carpenter. It'll be harrerin' to her, but then!—she might as well know it now as to hev him a goin' on an' continnerin' to deceive her."

"Yes, that's even so," responded Mrs. Deacon Carpenter. "You're right there, Sabrina."

"Do you s'pose she'll leave him?" asked Mrs. Peters, moving up closer to the others in order to carry on a choice little gossip all by themselves. Seems to me *I* should. Shouldn't you, Miss Carpenter?"

"I don't b'lieve I *could* stay with him arter I'd found out his wickedness," replied Mrs. Deacon Carpenter, solemnly. "Don't seem as if it would be my duty. Does 't to you, Sabrina?"

"I dunno," answered Miss Sabrina, thoughtfully. She had been trying for the last twenty years to get some man to cling to, and it was her private opinion that if she ever *did* get "clung onto" any man, she never 'd let go as long as she had strength to cling.

"I guess they're goin' to open the meetin'," remarked Mrs. Deacon Carpenter. "Have a pinch o' snuff, Miss Peters?"

The meeting was opened by prayer from Deacon Blodgett. The worthy man prayed for all who had gone astray in fervent exhortation, and Miss Sabrina, Mrs. Deacon Carpenter and Mrs. Peters groaned in concert over the depravity of human nature.

At last the prayer was done, and there was a general rousing up to widen wakeness. Business was about to begin.

"I s'pose you're aware, Brother Lane," began Deacon Blodgett, with many hems, and a deliberate blowing of his nose, "I s'pose that you're aware that the church has met to-day to inquire into certain conduct on your part which is deemed unbecoming in any man of moral character, and more so in a member of a church. Ahem! *Ahem!*"

Deacon Blodgett cleared his throat with much deliberation and proceeded to blow his nose again.

"I *don't* know anything about it," spoke up Mr. Lane. "I was not aware of any dissatisfaction in the mind of any one regarding my character and conduct, until I received your letter notifying me to be present to-day. I shall be much obliged if you will inform what the complaint is against me."

"Bold as brass," whispered Mrs. Peters.

"Sister Sabrina Lathrop brought the charge against you," said Deacon Blodgett. "Sister Sabriny, will you state what you saw?"

Miss Sabrina rose to her feet and proceeded to "state—"

"I was a-goin' by his house last Monday mornin', an' see Miss Lane's hired girl out in the yard a hangin' out clo'es. I see *Mr.* Lane," with an awful emphasis on the *Mr.*—her righteous indignation would not permit her to call him brother longer—"I see Mr. Lane come out o' the house with a basket full o' clo'es, an' jest as I got oppersite, he up an' kissed the hired girl. Yes, brethering an' sisters, he did," repeated Miss Sabrina mournfully," I see him do it, an' he did it agin'. I see him kiss her twice. I wouldn't ha' b'leeved it if Parson Dwight or Deacon Blodgett had a told me, but seein' it with my own eyes, I had to b'leeve it. That's all I have to say about it, but I felt it to be my Christian duty to show my brethering an' sisters in the church what a hypocrit we had among us, an' I du feel as if I'd dun right. I hope to hev an interest in your prayers when it is well with you," and down sat Miss Sabrina, conscious of having "discharged her duty."

Mr. Lane had listened to her like one who hardly understands what is being talked about. The minute she sat down, up jumped Mrs. Lane.

"I am happy to say that there isn't any truth whatever in Miss Lathrop's statement," she exclaimed, her eyes fairly flashing fire at poor Miss Sabrina. "Last Saturday my hired girl went home sick, and did not return until yesterday. On Monday John helped me do the washing, and I remember that he did kiss me once or twice while we were hanging out the clothes. I was not aware that it was anybody's business when or where or how many times a man kissed his wife. I think if there was less tattling, and back biting, and mischief-making, and more of minding each one's business, and thinking about our own shortcomings, instead of others wholly and ours not at all, there would be a good deal more peace and harmony in the neighborhood. I'm not afraid to trust my husband to hang out clothes with the hired girl, and, if *I* am not, I don't think anybody else need to meddle."

There was great excitement when Mrs. Lane had spoken. The men crowded around Mr. Lane and congratulated him, and the women buzzed like so many June-flies. Poor Miss Sabrina was left quite alone.

"How was *I* to know that it wasn't the hired girl?" she asked, indignantly, of Mrs. Deacon Carpenter. "It looked jest like her, and I s'posed it *was;* anyway I acted accordin' to what I felt to be my duty, an' if I was mistaken it wan't *my* fault."

A Lengthened Trance.

A special correspondent of the London Daily Telegraph has visited a girl at Turville, near Great Marlow, who, it is alleged, has been in a trance for nearly two years. He thus describes the interview:—The turned-down sheet disclosed the face of a girl who looked fully the age she was reported to be—fourteen. She was lying at a distance of about four yards from the window, and with her back to it; but, before I gave any particular attention to her, I had put back the window curtains, and there was light enough. She has dark brown hair, thick, and strong-looking. The girl's face is by no means cadaverous. There is a flush on the cheeks, which gave a pinkish tint, and there is some color in the thin lips. The eyes are calmly closed, as though in healthy sleep. I ventured to raise one of the lids and to touch the eye beneath—to pass the tip of my finger across it, in fact—but there was not even a quivering of the eye-lash.

Her position in the bed is a natural one. She lies on her left side and her cheek rests on her open hand. "She was always used to lie like that before she was afflicted," the mother informed me; and whenever she was obliged to leave the child by herself, she placed her hand so, because she appeared to be much more comfortable. I took hold of the girl's disengaged hand and found that it was quite warm and moist, and that the finger nails were neatly trimmed. The fingers are not in the least stiffened, and may be closed on the hand as freely as those of a sleeping person. It is not a skeleton hand, neither are any of the little girl's limbs so emaciated as, under the extraordinary circumstances alleged, might be expected. I measured the forepart of the arm by spanning it. I could barely make my thumb and middle finger meet. This would give eight and a half inches as the circumference of the arm.

The child's body is very thin as compared with her limbs, but I have seen children in hospitals who have ultimately overcome their disease, much thinner. There is not much substance in her flesh, however; it is soft and flabby, or, as her mother expressed it, "sammy." I placed my hands on her feet, and was startled to find them almost ice-cold. They were always cold, the mother said; so much so that she found it necessary to keep a hot-water bottle always ready to use in case other means—such as friction—failed to bring warmth into them. As regards the child's breathing it is so feeble that it is almost impossible to detect it; you cannot feel it by holding the cheek to her mouth, and only the faintest flutter is felt when the hand is laid over the region of the heart.

This is not the first instance of a trance in the Trilling family. The child's father lay three weeks speechless and motionless before died; and a brother of the father—I have only the woman's unsupported statement for this, be it borne in mind—lay six months and a week in the same condition before his demise. The mother of the entranced girl has married a second husband, a man named Sadler, an agricultural laborer, earning 12s. a week. Mrs. Sadler has had twelve children, but there are only two at home beside the insensible girl, and they are boys of 10 and 15 years of age, able to earn something. Up to the age of eleven years the child, Ann Trilling, enjoyed perfect health; then, however, she was afflicted with abscesses in her neck. To get cured of these, she was admitted into Reading Hospital, where, for seventeen weeks, she was treated.

Ultimately the hospital authorities, according to the mother's account, discharged her, on the ground that they could do no more than they had done. It was on a Tuesday that the child came out of the hospital, and, there being no more convenient method of carrying her home, she was placed in what the mother describes as a "jolting old cart." As soon as she reached home the child, for the first time in her life, was seized with fits, began to grow drowsy, had fresh fits frequently, and recovering, was drowsier still. This continued until the Thursday following the Tuesday on which she left Reading Hospital—the 29th of March, 1871, was the date—and on the evening of that day she roused herself, and began to talk to her mother about her pains, telling her she wished she could die and be at rest. The mother's narrative is, that she told the little girl to pray, and that they prayed together—the child rocking herself to and fro with her hands clasped, gradually losing command over herself, and growing more and more convulsed, her eyes rolling wildly, and her limbs twitching.

The mother, alarmed at these symptoms, sent immediately to Dr. Hammond, at Stoke Church; but when he arrived, to use her own expression, "the child was fixed down." That is to say, she had sunk into a state of insensibility, in which she now remains. For several months her inanimate condition was disturbed by fits of a kind similar to those which at first attacked her, and during her convulsions she would utter moaning sounds, as though in pain; but from the 29th March, 1871, until the present time—twenty-two months—she has never once voluntarily moved from any position in which she had been laid, has never opened her eyes to look about her, nor uttered any word or sound, or made any sign that she was conscious of living.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ Philadelphia barbers now give you Centennial shaves.

☞ Mr. Hedge who is recommended to try a watering-place next summer, is now riding around with the different milkmen on trial.

☞ Flute-playing is said to have become a fashionable amusement among young ladies in England.

☞ The editor of a country weekly, persuasively remarks: "We offer special inducements to our subscribers who club together and send in any little matter of eatables, as it were."

☞ The Buffalo church choirs are said to be the best "courting societies" in the State.

☞ The spring styles of bonnets are certainly superb. The ladies are showing increased excellence of taste, and they are to be commended. The latest bonnet is a trifle higher than freights on our railroads, and as graceful in proportion.

☞ A fascinating Parisian has been arrested because two women fought a duel about him.

☞ A Kentucky paper contains a report of a recent wedding, in which "the bride was not particularly handsome, but her father threw in seven mules and the husband was satisfied."

☞ A Parisian gunmaker has the following notice outside his window: "To those disappointed in love. A Great Choice of Patent Revolvers. N. B.—In the case, is all the apparatus necessary for extracting the ball and dressing the wound."

☞ A work recently published, giving sketches of the lives of female journalists, has the following "erratum" at the close of the volume: "Add 33⅓ per cent. to the ages mentioned in the foregoing."

☞ A precious relic has lately been discovered, being a dog-collar supposed to have belonged to Julius Cæsar, from the fact of having his name engraved on it.

☞ A Cleveland policeman invited guests to dine, and gave them roast dog. He enjoyed the joke until his friends found out what they had eaten. Now he is unwell.

☞ Whenever an editor has to pay more than seven dollars and a half for a gold watch, he writes an editorial for his paper headed, "We are Governed too Much."

☞ Thieves break in and steal in some of the station-houses to such an extent that the police have scarcely any clubs or overcoats left, and the authorities think of engaging a private watchman.

☞ At a hotel in Troy, the other day, a washerwoman unconsciously gathered up a baby with the soiled clothes and carried it off in her basket. The mother missed her infant, and after diligent search the landlord found it at the laundry, unwashed and unmangled.

☞ The Supreme Court of Illinois has decided that a man can no longer be held responsible for a slander uttered by his wife.

☞ A fool at Des Moines draws blood from his arms and uses it to write to his girl.

☞ The present fashionable way of ladies doing up their hair is called "la guillotine," because it was the mode with women condemned to death during the French Revolution, to arrange their hair in like manner, so that it might be out of the way of the fatal knife.

☞ A farmer's daughter received a hairy poodle dog as a present from a friend in Philadelphia. The unsophisticated damsel wrote back thanking her friend for the present, and saying that she found it very handy, when tied to a stick, to clean the windows with.

☞ A Cuyahoga Falls reporter, says that Tod Ford telegraphed to that town that he would lecture for the Ladies' Dime Society of the Congregational Church. He gave his subject as "A Taste of Naples and Rome," and the telegraph made it read, "A Taste of Apples and Rum."

☞ A new town is just started in Kansas, in which no one is to be allowed to settle who smokes or chews tobacco.

☞ When a woman gets to 70, spit curls look ridiculous.

☞ Barnum's new gorilla has signed the pledge for the ensuing travelling season, and will brain, with a club, the first man that asks him to drink during show hours.

☞ An accepted California suitor lately told his interest and good-will in his affianced to a rival for the price of a new waistcoat.

☞ A Syracuse paper says:—"The eye of the murdered Spencer girl was photographed by Ryder & Goatesworth for the benefit of Dr. George, who proposes to investigate the theory that upon the retina will be found the last impression a murdered person receives."

☞ What kind of cattle do they have out at Zanesville, Ohio? A man advertises that he wants a woman to "wash, iron and milk one or two cows."

☞ A Scotch terrier, advertised in Indiana, is "¼ wag tail, and ¾ fight."

☞ An Oregon youth is accused of dressing up a straw woman, and giving it a sleigh ride through the town, after his bashful approaches had been rebuffed by the genuine articles among his female acquaintances.

☞ There being four inches of water on the floor of the Bennington (Vt.) jail, the prisoners are again demanding a life-boat and umbrellas—the latter to protect them from the water that drips from the ceiling.

☞ On one of the gentlemen in Congress saying: "We must return to the food of our ancestors," somebody asked: "What food does he mean?" "Thistles, I suppose," said a wag.

☞ A clerk in the Indianapolis post-office is now in the last stages of drought, occasioned by his own gallantry in volunteering to lick and adjust postage-stamps for the young ladies who came to his window. He is very charming, and Indianapolis is full of good-looking girls, who love dearly to see him run out his tongue and moisten a stamp. The doctor says unless he can start the sap in his system he is a goner.

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Address DEACON & PETERSON, 319 *Walnut Street, Philadelphia.*

Single numbers of The Lady's Friend, 20 cents.

THE
SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 1873.

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If you wish to get up a club for THE POST, send us your name, and we will forward you, *free of charge*, a number of specimen copies of the paper, so that, with them, you can give your neighborhood a good canvassing.

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BE CAREFUL IN OPENING THE WRAPPERS OF THE CHROMO OR ENGRAVINGS. Our subscribers are enjoined to be very careful in opening the wrappers of the Chromo or Engravings when they are received lest they should injure them.

Address
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NOTICE.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST has been purchased and will hereafter be published by a Joint Stock Company, who have associated under the name of THE SATURDAY POST PUBLISHING COMPANY.

Mr. H. Peterson, who has been so long connected with THE POST, still has an interest in the paper, and will continue to occupy the position of Editor.

It is the purpose of the Company to put still more energy and enterprise into the publication, and make THE POST even more worthy than it has been of the support of its many thousands of readers.

We trust the old friends of THE POST, who have adhered to it through so many changing seasons, and to whose warm encouragement it owes so much, will still continue their friendship and support, and as they have opportunity commend THE POST to the favorable notice of their neighbors and friends.

OUR CENTENNIAL STORY.

We call the particular attention of our readers to the fine serial now appearing on our first page, entitled "St. Leger's Love; or, The Siege of Stanwix." Now that the whole country is beginning to feel the excitement attendant upon the celebration of our first Centenary of existence, every thing connected with the heroic "days of '76" obtains a new fascination for us. This remarkable story, in which, among other things, is told how a noble daughter of America, the prisoner of a British officer, risked her honor and her life to help her suffering country, is the work of Burr Thornbury, Esq., a gentleman whose romances we always lay with satisfaction before our readers. Unequalled as the literary matter of the POST has always been, we are determined that its stories shall be still finer, if possible, through the coming years which take the paper forward toward its own centennial anniversary.

LETTERS FROM ZIG.

A FOOLISH LITTLE THING.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Once "Bobbie Burns" wrote a poem about a nameless, nasty little beast which he saw creeping over a lady's bonnet in church. I always thought it was the foolishest thing to write a poem about. I don't think so now. I think Burns was very moderate to stop at one poem on the nameless little beast. Because I knew a certain little brute equally silly and senseless, equally diabolically pernicious, which a poet could write a whole Homer's Iliad about, twenty-four books complete. At least I'm positive one could make a Tennysonian King Arthur idyl of it.

The nasty little brute I refer to was a mouse. I can endure anything in this world better than mice. I can put up with a sneaking, yowling cat. I can even, yea, I do, take a sarcastic blowing up about being woman's rightish, regularly once a month from the editor of the POST. And I don't stay awake o' nights over it much. But a wretched, pusillanimous mouse with its petty thievery and its eternal, infernal nibble-nabble, sets me wild.

We had a most "ridiculous mus" at our house last week. We moved, a little while ago, and we hadn't put up our kitchen curtains yet. We had rolled them up in a roll, and tucked them behind the flour barrel. It wasn't neat to do that, but it was handy. Likewise a week ago we bought a nice new umbrella. It makes a family look respectable to have a nice umbrella. Well, we were demoralized yet, from moving; and by some means, I'll never pretend to say how it was—accidents will happen in the best regulated families—by some means that nice new respectable family umbrella got tucked behind the flour-barrel too. Again it wasn't neat, but it was handy.

In the course of time, last week, I came around to my kitchen curtains. After dinner one day, I started to put them up. Nelly fished them out from behind the flour barrel for me. Nelly is a nice, pretty girl who is kin to us. Nelly fished the curtains out, and we unrolled 'em. And those two curtains were riddled and ruined from one end to the other. We had made up our minds that there weren't any mice in our nice new house, and so had relaxed that eternal vigilance which is the price of liberty. You should have seen those curtains. At the outside part where they had been rolled up, there was a big round hole. The hole in the next layer wasn't quite so big, the next hole was a little smaller still, and so on, each one smaller than the last, until these beautiful, fringy-edged holes reached the wooden roller at the top. There the pesky mice had stopped. I suppose the roller made their teeth ache. There were fourteen holes in each curtain, from bottom to top, twenty-eight holes in the two curtains. I never in my life saw anything taper off as beautifully as those holes did. How I wished some man had been around to swear for me!

Wrathfully I dashed those open-work curtains upon the floor, and with a fateful sinking of the heart, drew from behind the flour-barrel my respectable new family umbrella. By the shield of Jupiter, that new umbrella was gone to flinders too! It was a ruined family umbrella. At that my feelings gave way wholly. I don't know what I might'nt have been tempted to say on my own book, if at that moment George hadn't come in. (I always make it a point to "meet my husband with a smile," and if I can't smile I grin. One has about as much effect on him as the other.) I poked that respectable family umbrella at him and laughed wildly. I shook it distractedly to show him that it was not what it had been, and as I shook it thus insanely, behold! out popped the diabolical author of all our woes—a mouse.

Then we had a mouse-hunt.

George took the poker, Nelly took the broom, and I took an old boot. The hunt was more exciting than an Indians fox-hunt. We stamped upon the floor and whistled for the enemy to come out. He didn't do it. We tore the wash-bench from its fastenings, and the tubs, wash-board and clothes-basket skipped insanely about the floor. George poked with his poker. The mouse darted across the kitchen like lightning and ran into the cupboard. Nelly darted after him, and in mad haste snatched out tea-kettle, dinner-pots, sauce-pan, skillets, buckwheat cake griddles and bake-pans; and pots and kettles executed a witches' dance alongside the tubs and wash-board. She even tore up from the bottom the brown paper which she puts there to keep the shelf nice.

The mouse ran down the tea-kettle spout.

The fight waxed hotter than the battle of Waterloo. I struck the tea-kettle a mighty blow with the old boot. It made a noise worse than the rattling of a car over the stony street. George poked valiantly into the tea-kettle with his poker. The mouse grunted. He poked yet again. The mouse skipped out and hopped into the potato-basket. I threw away the old boot, and made a dive for that mouse with my hands. My hands went into the potato-basket, and got the skin knocked off their knuckles. The mouse wasn't there. He was out o' that before you could disappear through a door when your beau comes and you haven't your hair combed. He jumped behind the flour-barrel.

Then came an "Iliad of woes." Then happened the catastrophe of this tale. It might be called A Tale of a Mouse. We saw the mouse's tail sticking out from behind the flour-barrel. It was a small tail. We sought to grasp it, but we couldn't. It was both a small and slippery tail. We held a council of war. We arranged a profound strategic movement. George was to slide the flour-barrel out from the wall, and Nelly was to catch the mouse. I, being a slow old poke, was of no use in a plan requiring both speed and brilliant daring. I was a mere army-bummer. I was chaplain of the regiment.

George is a tall man. He stands six feet when he has got the better of me in an argument. A nice ham hung moderately high up, suspended from the kitchen-shelf over the flour-barrel. A little distance below the ham, there sat upon another kitchen-shelf a pail of soft soap. Soft soap is one of the most useful articles in this world. But mark what befel our unhappy household, oh Friend! and weep. George moved the flour-barrel slightly, and lifted up his head suddenly. His head struck the ham, and loosened it from its frail fastenings. The ham fell against the pail of soft soap, and upset it. The flour-barrel happened to be wide open. The ham by this time was teetotally plastered with soft soap. The ham and half the soft soap went into the open flour-barrel. The rest of the soft soap went over Nelly's back and shoulders. George gave an insane plunge backward to avoid the soft soap and things, and caught his best trowsers upon a sharp nail, and tore an awful rent in 'em, so that it took part of the money we had saved up to pay our rent to buy him a new pair of unmentionables. Ham, soap, flour and trowsers all gone to pot.

And the mouse got away.

But all that wasn't the worst. Poor Nelly was deluged with soft soap from head to heels. It was a mercy and a blessing that it didn't get into her eyes. It got about everywhere else over her. There never was anybody so thoroughly soft-soaped upon earth. At this critical moment there came a knock at the door. The chaplain of the regiment opened it. John Harris was there. John Harris is a good-looking young man of an affectionate disposition and good moral character. Besides that he's well to do, and up to that disastrous mouse-day had had a tender side for our Nelly. Nelly liked him too, and we thought it would be a match, and a beautiful one. He was going to the city on the train, had just ten minutes to stay, and wanted to see Miss Nelly particularly. John is a business-like young man, and has a way of coming to the point with marvellous rapidity. I'm sure he was going to propose, or something like that. Because he looked so spooney.

Could he wait fifteen minutes? said I. Nelly would be glad to see him, but she was so particularly engaged just at that moment. (I should think she was!) No; he couldn't wait five minutes, said John Harris, eyeing me suspiciously. I believe in my soul John Harris thought we were fighting. And no wonder! There was racket enough going on to rouse the murdered man who is buried under the house. John Harris walked away in a huff. Nelly clawed the soap off her a little and ran to the front window just in time to see him turn the corner. Sunday evening he didn't come to see our Nelly, but went to church with Kate Aten. Kate Aten is Nelly's rival, a spiteful, deceiving creature as ever lived, who has been moving heaven and earth for six months to cut good little Nelly out. Poor Nelly didn't sleep a wink that night.

To-day Kate Aten's mother told us that John Harris and her daughter were engaged. Nelly has lost her husband. George has lost his best trowsers. Our little household has lost its family ham, flour and soft soap, likewise its kitchen curtains and its respectable family umbrella.

And the mouse got away! ZIG.

☞ Voltaire said of Mademoiselle de Livry, "She is so beautiful that I raised my long, thin body, and stood before her like a point of admiration."

☞ And now they have invented artificial butter. And why not? We have artificial hair. The public, we mean, has artificial hair.

LETTER FROM NEW YORK.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

DEAR POST: "We met by chance, the usual way," and I asked her why she looked so weary and discouraged? Her reply was, "House-hunting."

It told-volumes.

I have been house-hunting myself this Spring, and I know all about it. I did not go for my own benefit, but to oblige a friend.

We were having lovely weather, soft, balmy and pleasant enough to suggest the propriety of putting furs away for the summer.

My friend was not difficult. She would live in a large house, provided the rent was not too high, or she would live in a small house, if it was in a good street, or if neither were to be found, she would take a "French flat."

I set Tuesday as the day to step out and secure premises for her; but Tuesday it rained "cats and dogs," and the wind blew so that I was afraid of getting a sign-board or a window-shutter on my head, so I wisely remained in-doors, and waited for Wednesday. It came, of course, and it was just the meanest specimen of a Wednesday I ever saw; cold, raw, windy and disagreeable, with every now and then a sprinkle of rain just to frighten one and make him put up his new Spring umbrella, and get it turned wrong side out, so that the by-standers could laugh at him.

I had been told that energetic people never minded the weather when they had anything important on hand, so I buckled on my armor and started out, leaving word with the "girl" that I would be back to lunch, certain.

It was an easy matter to step into a real estate office and ask to look at their list of "To let" houses. But somehow, in reading over a list, you can't just make up your mind whether this or that house will exactly suit or not. You only know it is a brown-stone, three stories and basement, in good repair, possession on the first of May. Rent $1,000. Or it is a two-story frame, all modern improvements, rent $500; or an English basement brick house, in a nice neighborhood. Any of them are good enough, you think, and then you try to make up your mind which you had better look at, and finally take "permits" for the whole of them—at least that is what *I* did that cold, windy Wednesday. The brown-stone was on the East side, as east as they could get it without crowding the Blackwell Islanders, and the English basement was as far on the west side as it could be without interfering with the Albany boats, while the desirable frame dwelling, with all modern improvements, was away up-town, a day's journey it seemed from the rest.

However, house hunters expect such things, and I started out to see the "brown stone." Arriving there, a crabbed, vinegar-faced female, who said she was the "lady," informed me that they didn't show the house until after four o'clock. I showed the "permit," and ventured to inform her that I had come a long distance, upon which she politely shut the door in my face, with the information that she didn't care for the "permit." I didn't think my friend would like the house or the location, so I started "Westward, ho!" and in time arrived at the "English basement." The "outside" did not look very inviting, but I rang the bell and showed the "permit," and the French lady's maid, in a rich brogue, gave me to understand that her "mishtress" was in the parlor, and I had better see her. I started for the parlor at once, but before I reached it, was met by the lady, who was in every respect the reverse of the other, so much the reverse as to be even more terrible, I thought. She was glad to have the opportunity to oblige me, she never had any person to show her house, it was just as well when people called to let them go over it, and not put them to the trouble of calling again; some folks wanted time to get their houses in order, but hers was just the same all the time. (I was sorry for that, for not a bed was made, or a dish washed, or a floor swept.) The house, she said, was out of repair, and as the landlord was not willing to go to any expense, they should leave first of May. It *was* out of repair. In some rooms the whole ceiling lay on the carpets just as it had fallen; no use having but one "siege" with it, she said, so she was going to leave it right there until she "moved." The window shutters were broken and the windows were broken, the gas leaked so that every room was permeated with the sickening odor, the "plumbing" was all out of order, there was the winter's accumulation of ashes and garbage in the back yard, while the neighborhood was as low and bad as it could be. I knew the house wouldn't suit before I left the parlor, but the lady insisted upon my going all over it, from cellar to garret; and by the time I got back to the front door I knew where that woman was born, at what age she married, what kind of a looking man her husband was, what business he was engaged in, how many children she had, how many of them had had the whooping cough, and how many were exposed and didn't take it. I knew every house she had lived in for the last four years, how much trouble she had had with servant girls, how many times burglars had been in the house, how many times she had her pocket picked in the street cars; and as I reached the pavement, she said they were going to have corn-beef and spinach for dinner, and she should have to look to it, as the girl wasn't a very good cook, and her husband was very particular about his spinach. I was glad he was particular about something.

By that time I was pretty tired, but as the places would neither of them do, and all my trouble had resulted in nothing, I thought I would see the Frame cottage with all modern improvements. So getting into a crowded car, with a fair prospect of having to stand up the entire distance, I started up town. In two hours I reached it. I had been disappointed in the others, but this one capped the climax. A little weather-beaten hovel crowded in between two blocks of four-story tenement houses; hemmed completely, in with no chance for a breath of air. And children! Well, I didn't suppose there were so many children in the world as were congregated in that street. However, having a permit, and have travelled so far I concluded to see the thing out, so advanced boldly and rang the bell. A distressed-looking Irish woman with a sickly baby in her arms came to the door, and after half a dozen orders to the children who had gathered around and were staring with open mouths, to "be off wid ye" and the like, she condescended to look at me. She did not know the house was "to let," and they had no "intintion" of leaving, she said, but I could come in and see. I did not go very far in, only just enough to discover that the modern improvements consisted of cold water in the kitchen, and nothing else.

I felt dreadfully used up and discouraged with my day's work, but concluded I would look a little farther, so went into an "office" in that neighborhood. There were two clerks and the proprietor, and they were all busy with about fifty females, every one talking as fast as possible, and such a babel of brown-stone houses, three-story brick, frame cottages, French flats, first floors, second floors, top floors, all modern improvements, any nuisance in the neighborhood, handy to street cars—Gracious! I backed right straight out, and in so doing ran against a dozen more women in search of houses.

I did not know what to do.—I knew I should go home, and I knew I shouldn't hunt any more houses to oblige a friend, but I didn't like to waste the whole day—have nothing whatever to show for it, so, I stopped into the office on my return, and told them the houses wouldn't answer, and asked for "permits" to look at some French flats. They gave them to me. The very cheapest was sixty dollars per month in advance, and from this they went up in regular ratio to one hundred and fifty dollars in advance. Armed with these I called on my friend, and gave them into her possession.

She went to look at them the next day, and didn't find any that she liked. Great large floors, done off into stalls, she said they were, and in most of them the bed-rooms were so small that she would have had to get out of bed into the hall, as an ordinary sized bedstead would have completely filled the room.

And stairs! She said she had been up and down more than five hundred flights, and as for house-hunting any more, she would not (heavy emphasis on *not*) but would stay where she was, if the landlord did raise the rent a hundred dollars and make them do all their own repairs.

I suppose neither of us would have cared so much about the labor of house-hunting, if we had worked on the eight hour system, but as we both put in a good ten hours, we were disgusted and tired too.

OLIVE KING.

PENSEZ A MOI.

BY SOPHIE SPARKLE.

Dost thou remember, love, the violet
Thou gav'st to me, bidding me ne'er forget
To think of thee?
Dear heart! how many a lonely hour
I've gazed upon thy faded flower,
And sighed that mem'ry had not power
To bring thee back to me.

Forget thee? Not a day nor hour
Glides o'er my soul
But brings sweet, tender dreams of thee,
And thoughts that sweep beyond control,
Great waves of passion o'er me roll,
Like the resistless tide of some deep sea—
'Tis thus, my love, that I remember thee.

Forget thee? Could I give my life for thine,
'Twere naught to die!
Like thy dear flowret, oh my heart,
On thy dear heart forever would I lie.
Forget thee? Will thou e'er divine
This strong, deep, maddening love of mine,
That links my inmost soul with thine?

How oft with bitter tears are wet,
The petals of the violet!
Tears of a vain regret,
That fate hath sundered thee from me.
It may be that love's star for me has set;
But while my heart still throbs I'll ne'er forget,
Nor cease with all my soul to worship thee.
Forget, I pray thee, oh, forget not me!
Pensez a moi.

HOME AND SOCIETY.

CLEANING THE PREMISES, OUR CELLARS AND DRAINS, RATS, &c.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

In both cities and villages cleanliness is the best physician, and the cheapest which we can employ, for his charges are very small, he gives no medicine, and he understands how to invigorate the system; is, indeed, far better for us than all the bitters and spring tonics which are manufactured in this Union.

If we would only supply ourselves with a goodly quantity of pure air, fresh water, and timely exercise and the like, we might exorcise that hateful imp—disease—and preserve our bodies and mind in a healthful condition. We all know that there is no comfort and no pleasure to the invalid—life is only a bitter strife—and the grave, at last, becomes a pleasant thought to him. But we do not all know that at least one-half of the diseases which flesh is heir to, proceeds from ill-ventilated sleeping apartments, and foul cellars and drainage.

Close, ill-aired sleeping rooms; iron air-tight stoves; and damp cellars are making the families of our farmers as sickly as those in the bad parts of the city have been heretofore. And we ask, why should the dwellers amid the deliciously pure country air be subjected to fearful scourges of scarlet fever, diptheria and spotted fever? The pestilential, fever-breeding odors of a city tenement-house are known to breed such loathsome diseases; and now our country homes are not exempt from them; and yearly hundreds of adults and children perish in terrible agony under their tortures.

Such lamentable visitations are, usually, considered as chastenings from Divine Providence; but we think that they are directly traceable to an ignorance of the commonest laws of hygiene.

An old, neglected drain sends forth its mephitic odors, and poisons the air, and our dearest friends sink away under its fearful influence. There is not a town or village in our Union but has suffered from these causes—these mephitic exhalations—and yet the inhabitants are frequently, unwilling to trace the effect to the cause.

We know of a respectable couple living in a very healthy region, who built themselves a nice, comfortable house, but neglected to provide suitable drainage for the slops from the kitchen—and therefore the waste water was thrown upon the grass beside the kitchen-door. This was allowed for the whole summer; but when September came in, sickness came with it; and both the man and his wife were seized with typhoid fever—and for six weeks were racked with agony, and did not recover their former condition of health for several months.

The Board of Health visited their premises and saw the cause of their illness; but the man would not listen to them—and still declares that want of efficient drainage was not the cause of the illness from which they suffered.

Such lamentable ignorance exists in every community, and therefore hundreds die every year, wasted away with disease and sufferings entailed upon them by the sins of their fathers and mothers, who will not heed the advice of those whose superior knowledge could save them from much grief and woe.

Well-educated and experienced physicians assert that typhoid fever always springs from bad drainage and foul cellars—is the effect of mephitic exhalations, inhaled into the system. They poison the blood, and generate the fever which is such a terrible cause of suffering and death.

A damp, close, ill-ventilated cellar becomes filled with disagreeable odors in the Spring, and unless duly cleaned and aired, it will surely feed disease.

Have our housekeepers inspected their cellars this season? Have they thrown open the windows, and, if possible, the doors leading into the open air, and gathered up all the decaying fragments?

If not, let us beg them to attend to the work directly. Sweep the walls and floors thoroughly; and then mix a white-wash with unslaked lime and boiling water, and add to it enough sulphate of iron (commonly called copperas) to turn it a light yellow. It is a very cheap ingredient, costing but a few cents per pound, and is the best disinfectant in use—quite equal to carbolic acid, and does not possess its very disagreeable odor. It is also very obnoxious to rats and mice, and we have never known them to remain where it is used. Dissolve it in water, and sprinkle the floors with it; put it, in a dry state, into the haunts of rats and mice, and see for yourselves if they will not soon depart.

But if you do not succeed in expelling these unwelcome tenants, you will purify the whole atmosphere of the cellar, and that is a great gain. Ventilation and light should be admitted into every cellar in the early spring, and a thorough cleansing will promote a much greater degree of health in the family.

But the drains must also be attended to and thoroughly purified if we would feel at ease concerning the well-being of our children, for foul drains and water closets are the most fruitful causes of diptheria, typhoid fever, *et id omne genus*. And for this purpose we cannot use anything more efficacious than the crystals of copperas, which can be procured of every druggist in the land.

Use it in saucers or in cups, letting the crystals dissolve in water, and adding more to them as it evaporates. Dissolve one pound of it in three or four quarts of hot water and turn down the drains.

Attend to this matter weekly all the spring and summer months, and see for yourselves how greatly it will benefit your health and that of your household.

Lime is a very desirable disinfectant for privies, and should be used by the bushel every two weeks; then if the refuse is taken out both spring and fall, and spread over the garden, or composted with loam and spread upon the grass, you will soon discern its fertilizing powers.

The Chinese could teach us a lesson in the method of applying fertilizers, as they make great use of night soil, and thus avoid a prolific source of disease, while they turn its use to great profit to their land.

If the use of earth-closets could be introduced more generally into our houses, they would be found very beneficial, yet they require careful attention, and there is no doubt but what they would be neglected in many households.

The one great curse of thousands of homes is NEGLECT. When we see the yards of many homes, in both city and country, we do not wonder that gaunt disease stalks into so many households, and death follows in its footsteps.

Often the ground is soaked with slops, and vegetable *debris* litters the grass, while choked drains and badly constructed and cared for privies, poison the sweet atmosphere, and create fevers, etc. If the Asiatic Dragon—yclept Cholera—pays us a visit this year, as many wise persons think, it will, we are sure that it will find as many victims in the country as in the city, unless more heed is paid to the cellars, drains and out houses than has been done in the past five years. DAISY EYEBRIGHT.

THE WRECK OF THE ATLANTIC.

The whole country has been shocked by the terrible tidings of the wreck of the steamship Atlantic, of the White Star Line. The full, sad story is told in a few words. Starting from Liverpool on the 20th of March, on the eleventh day she finds her stock of coal exhausted. She was then about twenty miles from Halifax, Nova Scotia, and Captain Williams concluded to make sail for that place.

About midnight the Captain and the third mate retired to rest—but in a few hours a great shock awakened all on board, and sent consternation into every heart. The captain's reckoning had been at fault, and his vessel had dashed on Meagher's Rock, near Cape Prospect.

There were about 1000 souls on board—of whom 760 were steerage passengers, men, women and children. There were also about 33 cabin passengers. Of all on board the reports say that only about 430 were saved, and that about 500 were drowned. Not a single woman, it is said, was saved, and probably only one child. Most of them were drowned in their berths. The ship struck about 2 A. M., the weather at the time being dark but not thick, with a rough sea.

Third officer Brady says that the captain went into his chart room, leaving orders to be called if there was any change in the ship's position. Brady went to bed about the same time as the captain. The next thing he remembers is that he was thrown out of his bunk and felt the ship strike several times. He then rushed on deck and found the captain and officers there and the deck full of passengers. He got an axe and commenced to clear away the boats. The captain and other officers were busy doing the same thing. Brady got his boat out and put two women in it. A number of men attempted to get into it, and about a dozen succeeded. Just at that moment the steamer fell over on her beam side. Only one boat had been got out, and that was carried down by the steamer and all in it lost. Brady scrambled into the mizzen rigging, which was above the water, and seeing he could do nothing there, went forward and removed the halyards, being assisted by Quartermasters Spikman and Owen. Brady then took the halyards and all three swam to the rock. The line was hauled ashore and a number of passengers landed by it. A number had got on it, but as the tide was rising, their position was no better than on the vessel. Just then fishermen on shore came out in boats and rescued those on the rock and a large number from the rigging. Brady remained at the scene until noon when all who were alive on board had been saved, except chief officer Mr. Firth, who was in the rigging shouting for help. Brady says he tried to get a crew to go to Firth's rescue, but the sea was so heavy that nobody would volunteer.

Soon after the vessel struck, the hull of the steamer became almost totally submerged, and only the bow and the masts remained above water. The greater part of the passengers were in their rooms below at the time, and were immediately drowned. Indeed, so soon after striking did the steamer sink, that many of the passengers were, possibly, sleeping peacefully, in blissful ignorance of all that was going on around them, and passed into eternity without a struggle. Of those on deck, numbering several hundreds, many were washed overboard when the ship fell over, and their cries for help, as they struggled in vain for life, were most heartrending. Many, however, had taken refuge in the rigging and on the bow, and were still living, but with the prospect of almost certain death before them, for they knew not where they were, and were in momentary expectation of the ship sinking further, and engulfing them all. Even as they were clinging in desperation to the rigging, with the sea washing them continually, their situation was most trying, and every few minutes some of them, benumbed by the cold and exhausted from their struggles, loosened their hold and vanished.

One account says that at two o'clock Quartermaster Thomas went upon the bridge and advised the second officer that he was standing in too close to land, whereupon he was told to attend to his own business, that "he was neither captain nor mate." Mr. Thomas then went to the fourth officer and asked for permission to go on to the main yards, as he (the fourth officer) would not else "see land until he struck it." His request was gruffly refused, and one hour and a quarter thereafter the Atlantic was being beaten to death on the rocks.

Is is, however, too soon to say who is accountable for this frightful disaster. The vessel probably, built for speed, was too long and narrow for safety. The captain and other officers probably were not as capable as they should have been. A false and wicked economy probably, also was to blame. So far, it would appear that a criminal carelessness, and a criminal want of ability, and a criminal desire to make speed at the risk of life, were the true causes of this awful calamity.

THE VIEW OF THE DEAD.

A correspondent of the N. Y. Herald says: "The dead lay in all positions—half recumbent, stiffened by death, and icy cold; wildly agitated, as if the struggle had been long and bitter; easy and natural, making one almost believe that no agony had been suffered by the departed; defensive, as if resisting the buffeting of the maddened waves on the horrid still night on the bare cliffs; in all stages of dress, from the well-to-do emigrant with his clothes all on, evidencing his habits, to the weary sailor, just relieved from his watch, who had turned in, clad in wet garments; women, whose dresses had been torn to rags by the action of the breakers; children, as they might have been in their beds, but one and all carefully and reverentially covered where mutilations disfigured the form; for, alas! the work of rescue needs a bold and unscrupulous and, hand the floating body must be gaffed as it washes by, and no matter where the sharp hook strikes, whether on face or neck or body, it cuts and tears frightfully. Some corpses had been so terribly lacerated that sail cloth had been used to cover up the features and the limbs which love itself could no longer recognize. Hands, arms, feet, and legs that were bare were seen around, and all were bleached and shrunken horribly.

"Faces were discolored and blotched red, green, yea, all manner of hideous colors; and again, there were those fair and rosy as in life. Gazing upon some of these forms one would have sworn they slept, and so strong was the illusion that in stepping by them the step was light, for fear of waking those who never will wake until the sound of the 'last trump.'

"In this awful array of one hundred and ten bodies—all that were discovered up to twelve o'clock—two faces struck the beholder with undisguised horror; one, that of a man, whose outstretched arms lent additional force to the wild expression of the widely distended eyes. These glared so intensely that their fixed look of despair was a force unequalled by any save that of a female body, and then, indeed, was the agony of death met angrily, fiercely, furiously, depicted with startling vividness on rigid lineaments and firm-set features.

"Stories of the dead having been plundered and abused are rife, and are much exaggerated; but there is no doubt that some of the crew, who were a bad lot, robbed all they could, but the presence of the fishermen prevented their doing so to any great extent. Some of the crew were insubordinate beyond the control of the officers during the voyage."

Another account says:—"The scene about the steamer was fearful. The lifeless body of the purser could be seen hanging over the side of the steamer, his head jammed in between the rails, and the sea causing the trunk and legs to keep in continual motion. Hundreds of other bodies could be seen in similar positions. Among the heartrending scenes, one or two were particularly sad. One gentleman, Albert Sumner of San Francisco, committed suicide by jumping from the rigging into the water, first taking off his coat. Others who were near him endeavored to dissuade him, but they were too much benumbed to prevent him. He said, 'There is no prospect of rescue, and it's useless to remain here and suffer," and then he jumped overboard. One lady, a saloon passenger, was heard to say to her husband, 'Leave me and save yourself. You can't save both.' But he refused, and they went down together, clasped in each other's arms. It was the occasion of much remark that with very few exceptions the married men all perished. When they found it impossible to save their wives and little ones, they preferred to die with them to deserting them. Many instances are known where the man could have escaped alone, but refused to do so. This was especially noticeable among the German emigrants and Americans.

"At one time during the weary watch before dawn the foreboom broke loose from its fastenings and swinging round instantly crushed to death about 20 persons who were gathered on the house. When the boats came from shore to rescue the survivors the sailors repeatedly pushed passengers aside or knocked them down and jumped into the boats. By direction of the officers the boats did not go too near the wreck, fearing that a rush might swamp them. The boats approached within a few yards and the people in them called to those on the steamer to jump in the water, one by one. When they did so the boatmen stood by and pulled them into the boat.

"Among the steerage passengers who gained the deck were a young Englishman and his wife and child. Just after they had succeeded in getting into the mizen rigging a wave snatched away the child. Immediately after an order came from the captain that all who could do so should get into the fore rigging, because that part of the vessel was higher and less exposed. The young woman said that she was too much exhausted to attempt to move, but entreated her husband to go and save himself. He did so, but Mr. Frith, the chief officer, refused to leave her, and stood by her until she died and dropped into the sea. It had then become impossible for him to shift to a place of greater safety, and he was the last person taken off the ill-fated steamer.

"Among the cabin passengers were a party of wealthy American ladies and gentlemen who had been spending several months in a European tour, and were full of life and hope, returning to their homes. Only two or three of the party were saved."

It is admitted by Captain Williams, in his evidence before the Board of Inquiry ordered by the Dominion government, that he made a mistake in the position of the vessel. He said:—"I was on the bridge of the vessel up to twenty minutes past twelve. Up to midnight it was brilliant starlight, after that there was occasional sight of the stars. When I left the bridge I went into the chart room, thirty feet abaft the bridge, on the upper deck, within easy call of the officer on deck. I got up at two o'clock, looked into the wheel house, and then lay down for an alarm. In making my calculations I estimated her speed to be eleven knots; she had increased gradually from seven and a half to twelve knots; the third officer reported that she had run one hundred and twenty-two miles at twelve o'clock; that agreed with my calculations. I expected the ship at three o'clock would be eighteen or twenty miles south of Sambro, and intended to lay by until daylight. I had not my clothes off at all. I had every reason to put confidence in the second officer. He had made two voyages in the ship. I always found him a steady, sober man.

"The bridge was thirty-six feet above the level of the sea. I knew I was apt to approach shore. The clearness of the night and the certainty of seeing the light (Sambro light) were my only reasons for not sounding. I am now satisfied that when I went into the chart room I was mistaken in the locality of the ship. She must have been further northward and westward than I thought. I knew the coast was an iron-bound and dangerous one, though I had never been on it. I would not have got into forty-five fathoms of water until I was thirteen or fourteen miles south of Sambro, where I should stop the ship. If I had been sounding regularly from 12 to 3 o'clock I would have been on deck, and the ship would not have gone ashore. There were three quartermasters and the second and fourth officers on deck: it was my second voyage to America in that ship."

KATY DID.

Katy did—what did Katy do?
She kissed me a kiss that thrilled me through—
Out in the light
Of the stars at night—
The stars that winked and blinked at the sight;
Among the flowers
Of the summer hours,
And the perfumed air of the leafy bowers,
Katy did—
And then she hid
Her eye 'neath the veil of its fringed lid.
She did, she did.
Katy did.

Katy did—and what did she do?
She vowed me a vow, and she kept it, too;
She said for life
She would be my wife,
That never between us should come any strife;
That for weal or woe
To the priest she would go,
And on me her love and faith would bestow—
Katy did,
And then she hid
Her eye 'neath the veil of its fringed lid.
She did, she did,
Katy did.

Katy did—what more did she do?
She brought a bird to my wondering view—
A lovely girl
With a golden curl,
And a heart as pure as the purest pearl;
And the little minx,
With her winks and kinks,
Is the merriest maid in the world methinks.
Katy did,
Her eye, half hid,
Peeped forth from the veil of fringed lid;
She did, she did,
Katy did.

Katy did—what more could she do?
She gave me (you'll laugh, but I'll tell you true)
A bouncing boy,
To be my joy,
To bother my pate and my heart employ;
And the little rogue
Is much in vogue
About our house, with his lisping brogue.
I couldn't forbid
What Katy did
As her eye peeped forth thro' the fringe of its lid—
What Katy did
I couldn't forbid.

Katy did—well, what more did she do?
Why, whenever my *spirits* became very *blue*
She laughed in glee
My sorrow to see,
And she kissed away my misery.
Ah, the merry dame,
It would be a great shame
If in word or thought I could Katy blame.
Katy did, Katy did,
Her eye, half hid,
Is peeping now through the fringe of its lid.
Katy did, Katy did,
Sweet Katy did.

Ever My Queen.

BY PIERCE EGAN,

AUTHOR OF "THE FLOWER OF THE FLOCK," "VIOLET; OR, THE WONDER OF KINGSWOOD CHASE," "MARK JARRETT'S DAISY," ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

THE QUEEN OF THE WORKROOM.

Within the last ten or fifteen years there have been raised in the city of London vast structures, less remarkable as examples of what may be termed the architecture of commerce, magnificent as they are, than for being the swarming hives of many manufacturing industries. Instead of, as in the old days, dividing the production of various goods for home or foreign consumption among many manufacturers residing in several parts of London or the country, the work has been brought under one roof, and the numerous handicrafts are ranged in different departments. The operations are conducted on a gigantic scale, and the members of the different firms are those gentlemen who now are classed as "merchant princes."

In one of these huge fabrics, situated very much within the sound of Bow Bells, doing an enormous home and shipping trade, was a department, occupying several floors, devoted to work produced by sewing machines. Each floor had its speciality, and it seemed that nothing the human hand could manufacture with a needle was beyond the scope of these wonderful little inventions, which not only performed the labor with extraordinary quickness, but with a beauty and precision beyond the power of the hand—the marvellously delicate hand—of woman to rival.

This fact was instanced in one of the rooms in which the most skillful of the skilled work-girls were employed. In this department the superior work, embracing all the higher branches of needlework, including the very finest examples of embroidery, apparently beyond the possible reach of a machine to execute, were turned out actually as if "human hands had never touched them." Even here, where every article to the unpractised eye was equally beautifully manipulated—if we may, by stretching a point, use the word—there were degrees of excellence in the manipulators. Of these there was one young girl the acknowledged superior of all.

That is to say, the forewoman acknowledged her to be so, by entrusting her with the finest and the most difficult tasks in embroidery, apparently far beyond the scope of the beautiful machine she worked with so much expertness to accomplish.

The superintendent, through whose hands the orders passed, declared her emphatically to be their "best hand;" being, however, more able to judge of the excellence of her work by the constant commendations of customers than his own knowledge of the points in which the peculiar skill was displayed.

Then, too, he was, perhaps, governed in some degree by her personal qualifications, because he was in the habit of assuring himself morn, noon and night, on his way to business, while in it, on his way home from it, and while disporting his weary and thin limbs in his "chambers in Weymouth-street, W.," that—

"She were the loveliest gurl he had ever drempt of—a perfect howri."

This opinion, too, he confided, in those terms, to a bosom friend, who sometimes partook with him, in his "nookery," of some "cold gin" and the friendly calumet.

There were between fifty and sixty other girls, all clever and industrious, in the same room—a long one with many windows—in this City Palace of Labor; but the majority of them did not think with the forewoman, so far as the superiority of the young lady's skill went; neither did they, in their hearts, believe that the young person who had jumped up, as it were, into the highest position in the room, deserved her elevation.

With regard to the superintendent's opinion, that "she were the loveliest gurl in the three kingdoms," they joined issue. They set him down as a "ridikilias" fool on that point, and declared they could point out in the room itself twenty girls with countenances much more handsome and attractive than her sanctified doll's face. Withal, she was generally liked for the sweetness of her manner, though spiteful remarks about her good looks were indulged in. Still there were a few who entertained the same opinion as the superintendent with respect to her beauty, and there was one who was already devotedly attached to her, and entertained for her an affectionate friendship far deeper, stronger and tenderer than she would perhaps had she been her own sister.

Whatever might be the diversity of opinion among the girls respecting her personal attractions, there was no qualification of the fact that in lineaments, form, and mien, she was the Queen of Beauty in that room. She sat evidently in a place of honor, hers being the best position for light, the most commanding in its situation, and having allotted to it more space than was accorded to any other young girl in the room.

She was a little above the middle height, and her figure slim, apparently even fragile, was of delicate and graceful proportions. Her hair, plaited and arranged with exceeding taste, and the skill of an *artiste*, was of that pale, delicate, shining brown so seldom seen on the human head, save among the high-born—the hue so unfitly described by any named color, but yet always to be recognized in Autumn's fading leaves in umbrageous woodlands.

Her face, placid, pensive, almost inanimate, was a remarkable type of aristocratic beauty—that refinement of style which is tacitly acknowledged the moment it is observed as an evidence of pure breed. Her eyes were large, and of that deep velvet-blue seen only on the blossoming leaf of the cultivated "heartsease;" but from the tone of her mind, and the inward promptings of a spirit which she held in subjection by a superior intelligence, which served her as a faithful monitor, she kept them almost constantly downcast, and fully shrouded by her long, silken, curved, dark eyelashes.

When she did raise them and fasten them on some son of Adam, either inquiringly or wonderingly, their soft intensity supplied him with more than enough convulsive emotion for that day. "Angels, ever bright and fair," was his theme—if he knew the air—and he wandered into solitary places, full of longing and yearning and sick sighs for the greater portion of the ensuing week.

Seated next to this very attractive young workwoman was another, also an example of bright looks and attractive features. She, however, had none of the symbols of blue blood in her veins, but she had that which went a long way to compensate for it.

She had decided features, all good—straight nose, bright brown, laughing eyes, a pretty mouth, full lips, clear, healthy complexion, a sunny smile. She had also rather a profusion of dark brown hair, either naturally glossy, or it was carefully oiled and brushed so as to make it so, and, like her companion's, was arranged with a neatness and skill which long practice in "doing her own hair" only could have given her.

It would have been a mistake, however, to suppose that because she had a joyous spirit she was giddy or frivolous. Already one or two adventurous youths, who, under that impression, had sought to make too free with her lips uninvited, had been enlightened by her on the point by receiving from her hand the privilege of securing a singing in the ears, which remained their own for a week or ten days.

There was a directness in her look, a self-reliant set upon her mouth when at rest, and a firmness in her carriage and step, which made any person to whom she said significantly "I stand no nonsense" readily believe her.

She was apparently very intent on her work. One foot was see-sawing with wondrous regularity and steadiness, and her machine was "whirring" at an almost incredible speed; but so was her tongue.

She had a good listener in her young aristocratic-looking companion, and she seemed quite contented if every now and then she elicited from her a monosyllable.

"Whatever is to be will be, that is certain, as mother said when she found two five-pound notes in an old pillow of grandmother's, which she picked to pieces because it was dropping to bits," she chattered; "but it was strange that I should pop upon you and your mother looking for lodgings, after you had been abroad for years, wasn't it?"

"Very strange—and very fortunate," responded her companion, in a low tone.

"Yes, it was lucky," proceeded the young girl; "I mean for me, for I was glad to see you again. I knew your mother—leastways, Mrs. Sydney—"

"Smith," interposed her companion, with a slight flutter of the eyelids.

"Pooh!" rejoined her friend, with a curl of the lip. "I knew you as Lyddy Sydney—'Handsome Lyd Sydney,' as poor father used to call you—and I liked you. I was fond of you, Lyddy—precious fond of you—so I am now—but—but—oh, I was fond of you then, you was such a dear, dear thing—you'd give me anything you had—and you used to have a good many tarts than—raspberry jam—they were beautiful!" and she smacked her lips at the bare recollection. "I shall never forget how I cried when you went away—nobody knew how or why. You went to America, didn't you!"

"Yes."

"Ah! it's a fine place, isn't it? Thousands and thousands of miles long, I'm told."

"I did not see very much of it."

"Why you were in it five years, wasn't you?"

"Yes; but very soon after we landed in New York, Mamma Smith met with a man she had known in England when they were young, she said. He was a dealer in horses, a low, rough person whom I could not appreciate at all, though mamma tried very hard, by threats and angry reproaches, to make me. She, however, liked him exceedingly—it seemed so strange to me—and she married him."

"Married him!" echoed her companion, with a start, at the same time breaking a thread, which necessitated the stopping and adjustment of her machine, but not the stopping of her tongue. "Why she was married already," she pursued, as she prosecuted her task of threading the needle again; "married to tipsy old Sydney."

"Yes," returned her companion, hesitatingly; "but she received intelligence from England very soon after we arrived in America that Papa Sydney had died in a drun—in a fit."

The girl uttered a derisive laugh.

"That won't wash, Lyddy—not with Lollie Leslie," she replied, pausing and looking up. "I never forget faces. I remembered yours the moment I set eyes on it, didn't I? Well, if ever I saw anybody I've seen before in my born days, I saw old Sydney the other day, shuffling along Cheapside with a face red and pimpled like the shell of a crawfish. He didn't see me—he was grinning and mumbling as if he had just heard a good joke—but I knew him directly I clapped eyes on him, though it is years ago since I saw him brought home on a stretcher to our house in mistake."

A cloud passed over the fair young face beside her, and the small lips moved murmuringly—

"It cannot be possible! Mamma could not have been so wicked!"

"Couldn't she?" returned her companion, with a toss of the head, as she caught the scarcely audible words. "Ah, I've heard mother say she was sure Mrs. Sydney had something on her mind—some great crime—which would come out one day: and she always said she was sure you were not her—"

"Hush there, young ladies—hush! hush—silence!" suddenly interrupted the forewoman, in a shrill treble, hurrying with upraised hands, down the narrow channel in the centre of the room. "Stop working—stop your machines! Mr. Fisell wants to say something to you!"

The rapid, sharp, clicking whirr from the machines ceased instantly, and a sudden and almost oppressive silence obtained, save that it was faintly broken by some titterings, whisperings, irreverent mutterings respecting "Old Fizzle," as the superintendent was nicknamed by the girls, and

THE WRECK OF THE ATLANTIC.

[See Fourth Page.]

wondering what he could want to say to all of them at one time.

They were not permitted more than a minute to air their speculations when Mr. Fisell entered the room, accompanied by a young gentleman, taller, slimmer, and more stately than the superintendent, but without any of his inflation of manner.

Immediately Lollie Leslie caught sight of the young gentleman, she bent over to her beautiful young companion, and whispered, hastily—

"Oh, Lyddy—I say, Lyddy, here is the new partner in the firm coming in with old Fizz. He is the son of a Scotch high and mighty nobleman—a real duke. You have heard of him—hav'n't you?"

"No," returned Lyddy, faintly, as she raised her eyes and directed them at the new member of the firm, who was slowly advancing up the room, and glancing beneath his eyelids rather than gazing directly at the many feminine countenances turned directly toward him.

"Oh, yes," continued Lollie, in her swift undertones, "he's a real, regular, right-down duke, or something of that sort. He's got a brother a marquis, another a soldier—a general or a officer—one a bishop, and this one's to be in a trade. I heard old Fizzle telling Mother Game-eye all about it the other day."

"Will you keep your tongue still, Miss Leslie?" interposed, with a frowning aspect, Miss Camoy, the forewoman, who was nicknamed by the "young ladies" "Game-eye," as much for a slight cast she had in her left orb as that it was a vulgar play upon her surname. "You are always chatter, chatter, chatter!"

Miss Lollie Leslie screwed up her nose, and protruded her tongue slightly between her teeth in reply, only she bent her head down so that the gesticulation was not seen by the forewoman, but she became silent.

Mr. Fisell advanced up the room with a mincing smile on his features, and his eyes fixed on the beautiful face of Miss Smith, the name by which she was known there. By his springy step and exceedingly gracious deportment it was instantly conjectured by the quick brains of the girls that some further mark of favor and honor was about to be bestowed upon the young lady who had already occupied the principal position among the workers—not only as an acknowledgment of superior skill, but by a general recognition of her personal qualifications for the post of honor.

And they were not mistaken.

Mr. Fisell drew himself up before Miss Lydia Smith. He set his chin rather high in the air, and expanding as much as he could manage of his chest, adorned with a large patch of blazing blue satin—the lower part of his necktie—he exclaimed, in a creamy voice—

"Miss Smith and young ladies, I have the greatest graterfication in interdoocing to your favorable notice the new and the youngest member of our firm—Mr. Hathol."

A buzz ran among the young girls like the murmur of a rising wind—a battery of one hundred eyes, at least, played instantly on the face of Mr. Athol. Mr. Fisell, however, threw up his hands again for silence, and elevated his voice. He let fall his eyelids, smiled benignantly, and inserted his thumbs in the armholes of his yellow-drab double-breasted waistcoat.

"A moment, if you please, ladies," he continued; "Mr. Hathol has a most grettifying enouncement to make to you all, and I realy must beg you to be as silent as you can while he is a-dressing you."

Mr. Athol, who had but just attained his twenty-first year, displayed a modest, easy dignity of deportment, though while Mr. Fisell was speaking he did not venture to look around him. The girls, therefore, were enabled to examine, scrutinize, and criticise his features, and to prepare themselves to offer an opinion on his merits at the very earliest opportunity afforded them.

They noted that he had a fair complexion, slightly tanned, as if he had been abroad, or had enjoyed the pleasures of yachting rather continuously. They observed and approved his upright, well-shaped form, his blue eyes, and the rather intense expression which was at times lambent in them, and even when at rest was peculiarly noticeable. They thought he had a sweet moustache and lovely soft, glossy, fawn-colored hair, and they tacitly acknowledged that in his aspect and his quiet, unobtrusive dignity he was a perfect gentleman.

In fact, the instant and unanimous mental verdict upon him was, that he was "a duck."

Whether Lydia Smith thought so, too, we shall, perhaps, know by and by, but it is certain that when, after she had somewhat curiously perused his lineaments, she saw that he suddenly directed his attention to her, a roseate flush mounted to her cheek and forehead, and she let fall her eyes to the ground.

This might have been occasioned by the circumstance that when he first turned his eyes to hers she perceived there was nothing more than a kindly and courteous sentiment shining in them, but that the instant he was enabled to take in the extreme loveliness of her face, as he did at a glance, his eyes assumed a sparkling brilliancy, and his features an animated expression of genuine and unqualified admiration. So rapidly, indeed, did his countenance undergo this change that she saw it before she had time to remove her own timid gaze from it.

This was only the work of a moment, for Mr. Fisell once more called out "Silence!" and the forewoman screamed "Silence!" So Mr. Athol, with a slight flush on his cheek, too, brought up unconsciously to himself by the lovely young creature who had just attracted his attention, prepared to deliver the oration that was expected from him.

He turned his eyes swiftly round him, and appeared to be amused by the many eager, shining, good-looking faces turned toward him, and the glittering eyes bent upon him, but, composing his features so that he should appear to be in earnest in what he said, he cleared his throat, and in a voice that enchanted his listeners, being none the less interesting because his words were pronounced with a slight Scottish accent, he exclaimed, making a slight gesture with his hand—

"Young ladies, I am entrusted with the most agreeable duty I have ever been honored with in my life. I beg of you to make a circle round me, that I may communicate to you some very pleasing intelligence."

What a scuffle there was in an instant. What a rush there was up to that elegant young man known to be a real live lord. What pushing, and squeezing, and exclamations of "Oh, I say, don't!" "Where are you driving to?" "No, thank you; not if I know it!" "Age before—you know," and so on, until Mr. Fisell and the forewoman, screeching in concert and acting with vigor, arrested the crushing, arranged the young "persons" in a circle, and, in a degree, put a check on the giggling and other little artifices adopted to bring Mr. Athol's full blue eyes in particular directions.

When he found that something like attention had been procured for him, he proceeded to say—

"Although I am delighted with the mission entrusted to me, I am, as you all know, quite new to this sort of thing—a complete novice—and I am afaid, before I have half got through the duty I have undertaken, you will think me very dull and stupid."

One or two of the more knowing damsels, with a vague notion about after-dinner speechifying, called out "Hear! hear!" and two or three timid voices ventured "'Ooray! 'ooray!" at which there was some laughing, a little hushing, and two awful frowns from the forewoman and Mr. Fisell.

"The fact is," he continued, with what the older girls regarded as an entrancing smile, "you are all in this room aware—at least, I presume so—that examples of needlework performed by the machines by which I am surrounded, and executed by you, have been exhibited in the Paris Exhibition. They have entered into competition with the finest examples of needlework accomplished by machinery, or by the handicraft of the most excellent, practised, and experienced female workers in the world. Young ladies, the prize medal given by that noble and valuable institution, has been awarded to your workmanship, because, in skill, neatness and beauty you have surpassed all competitors."

A screaming, shrill uproar, meant for "ringing cheers," instantly deafened the speaker, some of the young ladies, of course, doing their share by bursting into tears. Handkerchiefs were waved in the air, excepting where it was secretly known they were a little too dingy to be flourished, and some were recklessly thrown into the air, while a few of the maidens impulsively clapped their hands with enthusiastic delight.

There was more yet to come. "Old Fizzle and Game-eye," as the superintendent and forewoman were disrespectfully termed, had hard work to restrain the buoyancy of the excited girls, but something like quietude was once more obtained, and Mr. Athol resumed speaking—

"The firm of which I have the honor to be a junior member," he said, with a feeling of excitement quite new to him, "feel it their duty to make their grateful acknowledgements to you young ladies for this successful result of your labors, and I have the pleasure to inform you that you will each, at the end of the week, receive an appreciable gratuity in money."

The cries, the clatter, the shrill exclamations, cheers, clapping of hands, and involuntary salutatory movements that followed that announcement, proved what a boon a gift in money was regarded by those poor hard-working young girls.

Mr. Athol, with features a little more flushed than before, and speaking as though he had some little difficulty in breathing freely, went on—

"Of course, you admit that it is right to pay honor where honor is due, for you have all won a proud honor, and it will be paid to you."

"Certainly, sir!" "Of course!" and many other such observations were the responses appended to this proposition.

"Therefore," he continued, speaking more slowly, and with more deliberation, "you will also be readily prepared to accord honor where it is due."

A prompt assent to this was returned by many voices.

"One young lady in this room has designed nearly if not all the embroidery patterns which were sent for exhibition to Paris," he pursued.

"Lyddy Smith!" cried out Lollie Leslie, half hysterically.

"Smith! Smith! Smith!" echoed a dozen voices.

Poor Lydia Smith, with face, forehead, and neck a rose-crimson, bent down her head as though she had been guilty of something shameful, especially as she felt Lollie's hand pressed affectionately upon her shoulder, and perceived twenty white fingers pointing to her.

Mr. Athol observed her, and his cheeks glowed, too, while his eyes became almost superhumanly brilliant. He gazed steadfastly at her for a moment, and, advancing to her, gently took her hand in his.

She involuntarily raised her face, and he as involuntarily murmured an exclamation, although it was inaudible. Then, hastily clearing his throat, he said—

"Permit me, Miss Smith, to congratulate you upon the successful result of your labors. The extreme beauty of your designs has been, if possible, more than equalled by the extraordinary precision, delicacy, and wonderful skill with which you have reproduced them on fabrics of the rarest manufacture and fineness—so I am informed, for, as yet, I am no adept in these matters—and, therefore, it is mainly to your superior intelligence, and to the remarkable perfection to which you have brought the powers of that wonderful machine over which you are the presiding deity, that the firm are indebted for the honor of the prize medal. In their name, I am requested to beg your acceptance of this purse as a token of their recognition of your merits."

Again there were shrill, high-toned cheers and waving of handkerchiefs, for the great accomplishments possessed by Lydia Smith in that department were beyond a question of opinion.

"Let us make her Queen of the Workroom," shrieked Lollie Leslie, abruptly, at the top of her voice, addressing the girls, with vehement gesticulation.

The idea was a novel one, but it was caught up instantly, and echoed with remarkable enthusiasm, and one of the loudest voices among those who cheered was that of Mr. Athol.

"I came prepared for that expression of your good feelings, young ladies," he cried, elevating his voice in order to secure a chance of being heard. "Miss Camoy, be good enough to hand me that box," he added, and several young voices from individuals judiciously screened by companions, exclaimed—

"Now then, Game-eye, look sharp; trot it out, old sort."

Miss Camoy fancied she recognized those voices, and promised herself to prove it to the owners to some purpose one day, though not now. With affected quickness and emotion, she produced a circular cardboard box with gilt edges from under her arm, and, removing the lid, Mr. Athol snatched from it—strangely enough, with trembling fingers—an artificial wreath of laurels, beautifully made. This, without an instant's delay, he gracefully placed upon the brow of the shrinking, trembling, half-fainting Lydia, whose face had become a snow-white, and he led off in a stentorian voice a round of cheers, which made the rafters ring again.

In this he was supported with a kind of abandoned delirium by Mr. Fisell, who stared with starting eyes at the crowned deity, and made his throat so sore by screeching that for the next week he was compelled to go through a severe course of gargle.

The girls, too, entered into the idea with frenzied enthusiasm. They never remembered to have had their skill and devotion to their daily work so recognized and so honored before, and they seemed insane with delight. There was at the end of the room a tall, high-backed, wooden chair for the use of the forewoman, when tired with moving to and fro. It gave her an elevated position when seated, and enabled her to overlook her little flock. This chair was seized by half a dozen active girls, was brought to the spot where the fair Lydia, quite overpowered, was standing, and before she had a chance of resisting she was lifted in it amid cries, laughter, and tears.

Then Lollie Leslie, clasping her hands and elevating her voice, screamed and sobbed—

"Three cheers for the Queen of the Workroom!"

"Hooray!" shrieked every girl present.

CHAPTER VIII.

HAPPINESS IN PERSPECTIVE.

It was some little time before anything like silence could be once more restored. Men soon hold their tongues when they want to listen, but, as a rule, girls try to talk and listen too. The little Babel was, however, quieted, because Mr. Athol exerted himself—not at all demonstratively—to command something like attention to what he had further to communicate.

He was so very good-looking, so very gentlemanly, so much unlike "Fizzle," so very different a style of manhood in dress and carriage to what they were wont to see, that every one of them felt more anxious to appear amiable in his eyes.

And if some of them did squeeze forward and try to get the best place in front, it was only that he should bend his lovely blue eyes on them, and think what "nice girls" they were.

Mr. Athol, however, seemed only to have eyes for the Queen of the Workroom; but at the same time which is—as the world goes, and men, too, for that matter, rather curious—he observed a studied respectfulness of manner when addressing her, which could scarcely fail to be grateful to her own sense of self-respect, or to elevate her in the eyes of her companions.

He congratulated her on the proud position she had achieved, which he declared to be a just tribute to superior abilities, and he prognosticated with a rather peculiar significance, which was not lost, at least, on two or three of the hearers present, that it was but the foreshadowing of greater honors to come.

Indeed, the superintendent, looking ecstatically at the ceiling, thought—

"She may even become Mrs. Fisell."

"And now," added Mr. Athol, with his most cheery smile and his sprightliest bearing, "as we have got so far over the gratifying communication it has been my agreeable privilege to make to you, there is one other I have to deliver, which I am sure you will not consider much less pleasing. You know that we are full of orders, and we have but little time to spare even for so just and proper a demonstration as the present; but the firm have, after consultation, arrived at the decision that, as a token of their approbation of the past, and as an incitement to even excel your present performances in the future, to give you a whole day's pleasant enjoyment. They purpose chartering a steamer, which shall convey you all down the river Thames, and they will provide such entertainments and refreshments as will enable you to spend a very happy day. Due notice will be given to you of the appointed time, and you may be sure that it will be selected when the weather is at its brightest and the days are the longest."

The tumult which ensued was a sight to see, and defies description. Spontaneous requests from some of the unabashed young ladies for Mr. Athol to make one of the party even arose from several parts of the small crowd; but, without replying to them, he bowed courteously, and escaped from the room.

But not until he had gently pressed the fingers of the Queen of the Workroom, and received the gratification of meeting her upturned eyes, and reading in them her thankful appreciation of the honors he had assisted to pay her, and the respect which had accompanied it.

He felt thrilled, restless, feverish, as he hurried away, and she became oppressed with a strange sense of isolation she would have given worlds to have been able to vent in tears; and, indeed, it was with great difficulty she controlled them, especially when Lollie Leslie hugged her and kissed her like a wild creature, and some of the girls, pressing round her with their gratulations, would kiss her, too.

But work must not stand still even for such pleasant passages as this in the monotony of daily toil, and Miss Camoy, assisted by Mr. Fisell, harked the young ladies back to their places at their respective machines again, so that, in a comparatively brief space, the whirring of the instruments was going on as usual.

The Queen of the Workroom, however, although against her inclinations, by unanimous desire—nay, almost command—wore her wreath of laurels for that day, at least.

At dinner-time, however, tongues as well as teeth were permitted full play, and the excursion by the steamboat was the theme of hysteric discussion. The most extravagant notions were submitted for approval, and the most extravagant forecasts made. Almost every girl had a different notion as to the form the pleasures of the "good time" should take; but there seemed to be a common union of sentiment with reference to the imperative necessity of the presence of a military German band, of much dancing, and plenty of refreshments.

It seemed also to be a belief ridiculous to doubt, that a band of "nice fellows" from the cutters' and case-makers' departments would be provided for the occasion as partners in the dances, and companions for the rest of the day, perhaps for life—who could tell?

Lydia, the Queen of the Workroom, was, perhaps, the only one silent—the only one sad.

She could not efface from her vision those brilliant yet soft blue eyes—she could not remove from her hearing the mellow harmony of that melodious voice—nor could she, if she had wished—and she did not—dispel the sensation which had terilled her from the tips of her fingers to her heart when he had touched her hand.

Poor Lollie Leslie, in her efforts to brighten her spirits and make them buoyant—for she saw the cloud on her brow—contrived, unfortunately, to make her more depressed. Scarcely a sentence she uttered but jarred distressingly on the poor young queen's ears, and made her see the fearful chasm which yawned beneath her and her secret aspirations.

"Oh, Lyddy—oh, Lyddy!" she cried, enthusiastically, "isn't this awfully jolly? Here's lumps of delight all at once! You are made Queen of the Workroom with a bag of golden sovereigns—which you deserve, my dear, if any princess ever did—and we are all to have a raise in our screws at the end of the week, and a right-down splendiferous day out in the bargain! Oh, my, Lyddy, it is almost too much for one's brain to think of all at once! Heigho! What a darling duck of a fellow Mr. Athol is—isn't he. He is a real lord, you know, and no mistake. Won't I make myself amiable to him on the day out—for he will be sure to come—that's all! Won't I be dressed 'all in my best,' too! Ony think—isn't it fine, Lyddy? It is my turn to draw the sovereign out of the fund this week, and won't I come out splash—you'll see?"

And she shut her eyes and screwed up her lips, as she saw herself, in her mental vision, very splash indeed.

"You, too, Lyddy," she went on, garrulously, when satisfied with her mental inspection. "You will fig yourself out splendidly, too. You can, dear, you know, now, with your gift—bon-nus, I think old Fizz calls it. Mind, don't give a penny of it to old mother Sydney whatever. I know you hand her over all your wages; but this is your own money—your right down own winnings—to do just as you like with, and if I was you, I *would* come out tremenjus, because Mr. Athol will be sure to come with us in the steamboat. I could read that in his dear, dovey face. What eyes he has! Oh! my gracious!"

Again Lollie closed her eyes and screwed her lips, as if she were extracting all the sweet out of some barley-sugar.

At the name of Mr. Athol, however, the poor young queen shrank within herself like a sensitive plant at a breath of warm air. She conjectured, with unnecessary pain and a hot flush, that if she came out "tremenjus" on this occasion, Mr. Athol would guess that her finery had all been bought with the money he had presented her with. Consequently, he would see that she was very poor—abjectly poor. She writhed with a strange wrath to think that she was poor, and that he should be able to detect it.

Alas! too many young, foolish, unreflective girls with fair looks, have been able to trace their downfall and destruction to some such weak, vain thought.

"What, only two thin slices of bread and scraps again, Lyddy?" suddenly cried Lollie, as she opened the neat little leather bag in which Lydia always brought her daily meal, and discovered the sparse allowance. "Why, what a hard-hearted, selfish fiend old Mother Sydney must be, to starve you like this, when you earn so much—more than any one of us here. Why, it isn't a dinner for a child of six years old! No wonder you are thin and pale, my poor Lyddy."

"Mamma Smith is so poor," apologized Lydia, faintly, and without looking up. "She cannot work herself, and she cannot afford to give me much out of what she has to keep the house with."

"Yes, but if she starves you to death, she will have nothing at all to keep house with, the old, wicked thing, and fool, too," rejoined Lollie, indignantly.

"I am satisfied, Lollie, dear. I do not complain," returned Lydia, quietly. "Pray do not be annoyed on my account."

Lollie nodded her head twice or thrice significantly, as if she were forming a resolution. Whatever it was, however, she kept it to herself for the nonce. But it unquestionably had some reference to Mrs. Smith, *alias* May, *alias* Sydney—born Anne Marchmont.

She gave a tragic wave of her right hand in the air, as if she had dismissed that subject for the present, and then she clapped the palm of her left hand with her right, and said, emphatically—

"You don't dine off those two measly scraps of bread and salt slap, if I know it. I've only got a sausage to-day, Lottie Bloomer has only brought a thin rasher either, and Jennie Plummer could only manage a savvy-law, as she'd only a penny left this morning, or else they'd shared with you the best they've got, I know; but I tell you what, Lyddy dear, I've just been to the pan to get a place for my sausage, and there was a row going on between Becky Tudge and Loois Brown. Pretty Loo Brown has got a lovely chop—such a thick one—given her by a young cousin of hers, who is a butcher. She told me she made eyes at it on the board as she passed his shop coming to work this morning, and he all at once rolled it up in a cabbage-leaf, and popped it into her hand. 'There you are, Loo,' he said, 'think of me when you are grubbing off it.' She took it like a bird. That's something like a cousin, isn't it?"

The young queen's thoughts were busy in another direction, and she did not hear the remark. Without pausing, however, Lollie rattled on—

"Well, when I walked up to the pan, Loo wanted to fry her chop, but Betty Tudge had got a strong bloater, and wouldn't wait; she would lay her filthy red-herring close to Loo's chop and my sausage, so I whipped mine out of the pan; I advised Loo to do the same, and so she did. Besides, there was a bit of strong haddick, two slices of calves'-liver, a flounder, and a lot of other things cooking together, so we made up our minds to wait, and—I know what I know."

Without another word, she ran over to the fireplace devoted to the cooking of the various articles of food brought by the girls for their dinners, and, mingling with some of them who were waiting their turns to secure an eligible vacancy for the cooking of their provision in an enormous frying-pan, which contained even a greater medley than Lollie had enumerated—onions, potatoes and cabbage taking their respective allotments—she got up a conference.

The result was, after a brief delay, a nicely-cooked, "lovely thick chop, a present from a cousin," a few slices of fried potatoes, a penny twist, a bright knife and fork, a contribution of pepper and salt, all on a beautifully-clean plate, and arranged in such a manner as almost to "wake an appetite beneath the ribs of death." At least those who saw it, and some who winded its fragrance as it was borne triumphantly past them, thought so as they licked their only half-satisfied lips.

Lollie, attended by a deputation of four young damsels who had contributed to this alimentive fund, placed it abruptly before the fair Lydia, then sitting in a fit of deep abstraction, and retired as suddenly, saying—

"You are queen to-day. You must have a royal repast."

Poor Lydia looked up at her retreating companions, and then at the tempting dish placed before her; her eyes filled with tears at the generous and unselfish thoughtfulness it evinced, even more than the compliment it conveyed.

She was very hungry, even to faintness, and she perceived that if she made any demur she would have to combat a thousand protestations and urgings, and be compelled, after all, to pacify the kind donors by partaking of some, if ever so little. Therefore, for the moment—in fact, as a piece of policy—she stifled her sense of humiliation, for in spite of commonsense arguments, such was her feeling—and dined off the chop to the intense gratification of Lollie and the girls, who watched her from a distance with a growing conviction that with her good looks she was not so stuck-up, after all.

When night came, Lollie, who was her daily companion to and from the place of business, for they resided within a few doors of each other, easily contrived to obtain from Lydia the purse with which she had been presented and permission to examine the contents.

She took it a little aside, and found within it ten new, bright golden sovereigns, and with remarkable quickness and dexterity she whipped five of them into her pocket, muttering to herself—

"She shall go to that trip down the river like a real beautiful lady, if I have to do something very, very desperate for it."

Then she handed back the purse—a lady's—a very handsome, elaborately-worked, and beautifully-made Russia leather portmonnaie, and asked her if she had opened it. Lydia answered in the negative, and Lollie insisted upon her doing so before—as she knew she would—she handed it over with all it contained to the woman who claimed to be her mother.

Lollie saw the eyes of Lydia expand and brighten as they fastened on the glistening coin, and she said, quickly—

"You mean to keep that to buy some new things with, don't you, Lyddy?"

Lydia shook her head.

"It is wanted at home," she replied, with a sigh.

Lollie made an angry gesture of dissent.

"How could it be wanted at home if it hadn't been given to you to-day?" she demanded, almost fiercely. "You didn't expect it—how can that old grab-all expect it? You will not tell her, will you?"

"Of course, Lollie, dear," she answered, gravely, and yet kindly. "I have no secrets from Mamma Smith. I am sure you have none from your mamma."

"My mother isn't a bit like Mamma Smith, as you call her," returned Lollie, with a curling lips, "or else I pretty soon should have, I can tell you. You must have a bran new dress to go to our trip in, and if you give up all this money how are you to get it, I should like to know."

"I do not mean to join you on that day," murmured Lydia, in a more plaintive tone than she had intended. "I cannot go even decently dressed, and—I—I will not—no, I will not go poorly clad as I am."

"What, the Queen of the Workroom away on that glorious day? Ha! ha!" cried Lollie, with a gesture of supreme scorn. "We shall see about that."

Before the work ceased for the day, Mr. Fisell re-appeared, and informed the young ladies that the firm had fixed the following Wednesday fortnight for the steamboat trip, and that the time and place of assembling would be given to them on the day before.

"We are bound for Gravesend, young ladies," pursued Mr. Fisell, with his thumbs locked in the armholes of his vest. "There will be Rosherville, you know, with all its enjoyments; and I see by the papers, that the Royal Thames Yacht Club have a grand sailing match on that day, so we shall have lots to see and gratify us."

"Bray-vo Fizz!" exclaimed a voice from his rear.

He turned sharply round, but was unable to detect the disrespectful maiden. All the girls were tittering, but the delinquent was not observable.

He then moved to the Queen of the Workroom, and observed, with facetious patronage—

"I hope to be your mo-ark on that day, fair majesty of sewing-machines. I shall be in attendance on you, and it will be my duty and pleasure—very much my pleasure—to see to your every comfort—"

"Mr. Athol will do that," snapped Lollie, sharply and pertly.

"Hold your tongue, Miss Leslie, if you please. Hold your tongue until you are spoke to, Miss Forrard," he snarled.

And he frowned at her, too, as if he would reduce her proportions to those of a mouse. He turned again to Lydia, but he saw that she looked grave, and was by no means fascinated by his suggestion. The gilt, somehow, was rubbed off his gingerbread, and he felt it, so he retired with an unconcealed air of discomfort, exclaiming—

"More enon, young ladies—more enon!"

"Enough of you, old Fizz, every day; don't want you on the steamer, old man!" cried the same irreverent scoffer, as he disappeared through the door.

A great deal of discussion of the intended trip went on in undertones after this among the girls, and what they would wear "if they could get it" was animatedly suggested; but Lydia spoke very little upon any subject, and not at all on this, during the remainder of the day; rather strangely, Lollie preserved a strict silence too.

But only until she quitted the place of business with Lydia, and they were well on their way home; then she took up the subject, and merged into extravagant eulogiums upon Mr. Athol, to which Lydia listened with a silent, sighing gratification—with an emotion too full for words.

As they hurried on, Lollie talking with the utmost volubility, Lydia felt herself suddenly confronted by a man, who uttered a cry of what sounded like affrighted recognition. He seized her tightly by the two shoulders, and placing his face near to hers, perused her lineaments with glaring eyes.

Then he as abruptly released her, and hurried out of sight with the utmost rapidity.

Before Lydia could recover from her astonishment, Lollie half screamed—

"There, Lyddy! there? Did you see him? Don't you know who he is?"

"No," replied Lydia, bewildered, for she fancied withal the face was familiar to her.

"Why, it was old Sydney himself. I'd swear to him out of a thousand!" cried Lollie, excitedly.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The Cost of Conquest.

BY CLEMENTINE MONTAGU.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MR. SAXON'S PATIENT.

They say I'm mad—believe them not!
—*Haynes Bayley.*

Poor Edwards seemed dazzled and blinded by the light when he entered Mr. Hastings's drawing-room, and put up a hand covered with cuts and scratches to shade his weakened eyes. His clothes were torn, and his face was like his hands—scratched and bleeding. He looked feebly at Mrs. Hastings.

"They told me you lived here," he said, in a hollow voice, "and I thought you'd help me. I've got away."

He staggered through weakness or weariness, and Mr. Hastings gave him a glass of wine.

"Your name is Edwards," he said.

"Yes, sir, that's it. They've tried to make me believe I was mad, and that it was not my name; but it is. Miss Kate knows me."

"Of course I do; but I'm not Miss Kate now, Edwards. This gentleman is my husband, Mr. Hastings."

"Your husband, and not Mr. Philip!"

He looked puzzled, and she put her hand gently on his shoulder.

"You will understand all about it soon," she said. "Harry, he needs rest and refreshment now, and safety."

"He shall have all three, my dear. We will hear his story presently."

He rang the bell, and his own man appeared. He bade him take the stranger, and see him bathed, clothed and fed, but cautioned him not to talk to him, nor to allow any one else to approach him.

"Attend to him in my dressing-room," he said. "When he is ready to see us, let us know. Have no fear, my man," he added, kindly, seeing the hunted look in Edwards's eyes; "you are quite safe with us."

In less than an hour, Mr. and Mrs. Hastings were surprised by the appearance of a neatly-dressed, intelligent-looking man, very pale, as if from privation or illness, but having no trace of insanity in his manner or appearance. They made him sit down, and gave orders they were not to be disturbed.

"Now tell your whole story from the beginning," Mrs. Hastings said. "We have reason to suspect foul play of some sort from the very hour of Mr. Reynell's landing in Malta."

"Do you think it is your old master who has returned to England?" Katherine asked. "Sometimes I fancy it cannot be that Philip Reynell is changed, but that some one has stolen his place in the world, his patrimony, and his name."

"My dear Kate, what an idea!" said Mr. Hastings, and Edwards looked at her in surprise.

"It is my master who is at Boscobel, ma'am," he said, quietly.

"You are sure?"

"Quite sure; I saw him."

"When?"

"When I got away from the first place I was put to, I made straight for Boscobel. They caught me there. But I'll tell the whole tale from the beglaning, as you wish, sir."

They listened with breathless interest while he told them how he landed, full of hope, at Portsmouth, and made his way to Herefordshire, happy in the anticipation of a home with the master he so loved. He sent his luggage from the station, and walked.

"The scenery was so beautiful," he said. "I was so near my native county, I wanted to see all I could."

"But you never got to Boscobell," Mr. Hastings remarked.

"Yes I did, sir, and a lovely place it is. I walked right up through the park, and got to the front of the house. I looked about for a way to the back, but I couldn't see one, except a little gate leading to some ruins. I went in, and I stood looking about me, for it was very beautiful. There was a deep hole under an archway, looking like a well, and I stood by it a minute, wondering what it was, when all of a sudden, with a tremendous crash, I fell. Whether I was struck, or pushed, or grew giddy with looking down I don't know. I hardly know anything after. It seemed to me I fell thousands of feet, and saw a million of stars when I struck the bottom. After that I saw nothing. I heard a dog whining and scratching, and then voices—a man and a woman's. I knew the former, and then I knew no more until—"

"Until what?"

"Until I woke to life once more in a lunatic asylum. They called me John Jones, and swore I was brought there by my sister, as they did at this last place. I bore blows, starvation, and misery that will not bear description, for I knew there was either foul play or a mistake somewhere, and I bided my time to escape. It came, and I got to Boscobel, and hid in the ruins, for I was closely pursued. I saw my master face to face; but just as I was going to speak to him, he fell to the ground in a fit. I was seized at the same moment, and, too weak to resist, I was soon overpowered and taken back. The next day I was brought here."

"And you don't know at whose instigation?"

"No."

"You are sure it was your master you saw?"

"Quite sure."

"Whose voice was it you heard when you were down the hole?"

"It must have been a fancy. The man was dead—I saw him last in India."

"It is a curious story you have told us."

"It is true, sir—every word of it."

"I believe it; but have you no idea what sort of a person put you under restraint?"

"A tall, dark man came to the other asylum once, and I learned, from what the keepers said, that he had come about me. I was removed directly afterward. He was a foreigner, from his appearance."

"And Philip Reynell took a foreign servant at Malta," Mr. Hastings said, half to himself. "It is a tangled skein, Edwards, but we will help you to unwind it. What made you attempt your escape now?"

"Seeing Miss Kate, sir—I beg her pardon, Mrs. Hastings—"

"Oh, never mind—Miss Kate will do."

"I knew she would help me, sir. I know you did try, and they were going to move me again. I heard them talking about it. I was to be sent to Scotland to-day."

"They'll be puzzled to take you from my house. There's more in this matter than meets the eye. I must take counsel with a friend of mine who knows all the circumstances of your master's return."

"Harry, if it should be as I fancy—if my horrid thought should be true," Katherine faltered, "you will not be the one to denounce him?"

"I will never forget that my wife once called him friend," he replied. "Have no fear."

The door bell rang loudly, and Edwards, pale as death, started from his seat.

"Oh, save me, sir!" he said. "They are come for me!"

"They shall not have you," was the quiet reply, as a servant, entering the room, announced that the resident doctor of the asylum wished to speak to his master immediately.

Mr. Hastings received the doctor with all possible complacency, and asked his business with the utmost *sang froid*, poor Edwards trembling the while with terrible apprehension in Katherine's pretty sitting-room.

"The man you were inquiring about has escaped," the doctor said. "I fancy he will make for your house, Mr. Hastings."

"Why so?"

"Because he was aware of Mrs. Hastings's interest in him. His malady is of the cunning and calculating kind, and he would count on enlisting her sympathy, if she knows him."

"She does—well."

"Then may I ask you to do your utmost to detain him—to use force, if necessary to do so, till you can communicate with me? I have the most strict injunctions from his friends not to permit him to see or speak with any one outside the asylum."

"I have no doubt of that. Such patients as he are very inconvenient people to be at large."

"I do not understand you."

"Perhaps not. Do you know anything of this man's antecedents?"

"Nothing."

"I thought as much; and nothing of the people who placed him under your care?"

"No; they are country people, and pay regularly."

"He came to you from another asylum—Doctor Brash's, Llanygon House, Breconshire. You see I know a little about him, Mr. Saxon."

"I see you do—how, I cannot think."

"I know all but one thing. How long has he been with you?"

"Since January of last year."

"And this is May—sixteen months? When did you miss him?"

"Not an hour before I came out. The men are scouring the country in all directions in search of him."

"They may spare themselves the trouble. He is here."

"Here!"

"Yes."

"In your house! And you have detained him? I am deeply indebted to you, Mr. Hastings."

"Not so fast, Mr. Saxon. I have not detained him for you."

"I do not quite understand you. He is not fit to be at large. I will take him back with me. I shall want no assistance—he is perfectly quiet."

"Quiet! He is perfectly sane."

Mr. Saxton laughed slightly, and shrugged his shoulders.

"He appears so, and, except on the subject of his delusion, he certainly is."

"And his delusion is that he is one Edwards, valet to a Mr. Philip Reynell, of Boscobel Abbey?"

"That is part of it."

"My wife can vouch for the truth of all he has stated regarding his position. There is some reason, not apparent on the surface, for keeping him out of the way. I shall keep him here for the present, until I have investigated it thoroughly."

"Pardon me; you cannot do that. He is under my charge—placed there by parties who are responsible for his safe keeping. You cannot detain him, Mr. Hastings. The law will compel you to give him up."

"Hardly, I think—we shall see. I shall not let him leave my house until I have some proof that the people who placed him with you have a right to control his actions. I will be answerable for his safety. He will not run away from us."

Mr. Saxon was puzzled how to act. Mr. Hastings was a magistrate, and a man of influence in the county; and to enter his house, and take therefrom a man for whom he made himself responsible, by the strong arm of the law, was a proceeding likely to bring anything but *éclat* on the well-regulated establishment to which he belonged.

Just at that time there had been an *exposé* of two or three cases of flagrant cruelty on the part of asylum proprietors, and the press and the public were taking the matter up sharply. It would not do to have attention directed too strongly to them.

"I believe, as firmly as that I am sitting here, that Edwards—for that is his name, Mr. Saxon—has been kept hidden because there is some tremendous conspiracy going on which his presence would mar. Will you hear his story from his own lips? There is truth on the face of it in every line."

Mr. Saxon was hardly prepared to see the quiet, respectably-dressed, well-mannered person whom Mr. Hastings brought to him. He had actually seen very little of the patient. The case was attended to as an ordinary one in the usual routine of business, and, save as a quiet fellow who gave little trouble, he was hardly noticed. He was paid for regularly, and very little more was thought of him. Mr. Saxon did not tell Mr. Hastings that he had written to his patient's supposed friends, informing them of the efforts Katherine was making to get him out. The knowledge of their answer had been the immediate cause of his escape. They had written to order his immediate removal to a branch asylum under another name, and had forwarded the necessary means.

Edwards told his story over again when he had recovered somewhat from his terror, and Mr. Saxon listened with no small interest, making a note now and then as the tale went on. He was a little startled at hearing that his patient had no brother.

"But I am in correspondence with him," he said. "Mr. Jones, of Aberdovy."

"I've no brother, sir," he said; "never had one. I've a sister, if she isn't dead. I have not seen her since I was quite a lad, and went for a soldier. I've never been able to get a letter sent to her—I've been so watched."

"Where is she to be found?"

"At Clyro Court Farm, sir—Mrs. Mayhew. I'm not sure whether it's Breconshire or Radnorshire—it's so close upon the boundary line."

"We will write to her," Mr. Hastings said. "Now, Mr. Saxon, a word with you."

He desired Edwards to return to the room where he had left Katherine, and assured him once more of his perfect safety.

"I see nothing for it but to meet fraud with fraud," he said, when the door closed after him. "That man's story is true, Mr. Saxon."

"I think it is; but it will be difficult to prove it."

"You must keep his escape a secret. Send some one else away in his place—you can manage that?"

Mr. Saxon thought he could. There were sundry pauper patients in the asylum he could dispose of in any way not detrimental to their interests or his own.

"I will hold you blameless," Mr. Hastings said. "If my suspicions are correct, we shall be doing society a great benefit by exposing a fraud. If I am mistaken, the man is still safe, and I will bear all the consequences of what I have done. I will caution him not to make himself known to any one at present, and will see he does not correspond with his family."

After a little hesitation, Mr. Saxon consented to the plan. The attendants at the asylum were to be informed that the runaway had been found and lodged in the branch establishment, and the persons who had placed him under Mr. Saxon's charge were to be written to as usual, and Edwards was to take up his position as a servant in Mr. Hastings's household till it was seen the turn events would take.

"I shall write to Haughton, and take counsel with him," said Mr. Hastings when, Mr. Saxon gone, the house was shut up at the unusual hour of midnight. "It is a difficult affair to move in; but for the sake of his friendship with Philip Reynell's father, I should not like to do anything which he was not cognizant of."

Events sometimes come about by chance that we would give much to bring to pass by scheming, however difficult. Only two days after Edwards's establishment at Holmdale in his new position, Mr. Hastings's servant announced "Two gentlemen," and the husband and wife started up in pleased surprise to welcome Captain Haughton and a stranger.

"I wanted to take you by surprise, old fellow," the captain said, shaking hands first with his friend, and then with Katherine. "You didn't expect me in this part of the world, did you?"

"No, indeed, but we are none the less glad."

"I am on my way to Bessie's—that's my sister, Mrs. Armdale, Mrs. Hastings—and I am the bearer of a very pressing invitation to you and your lord and master here to go with me for a few days. Bessie has got up an archery meeting—prizes and costumes, and all the rest of the nonsense. But I am very rude—pray excuse me, doctor. Hastings, allow me to introduce my friend, Doctor Andrea Gnicoli, a man known everywhere, except in out-of-the-way places like this Holmdale of yours."

"Not quite unknown even here," Mr. Hastings said, greeting the doctor with *empressement*. "Doctor Gnicoli is too great a man to be unknown even in Holmdale."

The doctor and his friend remained the greater part of the day at Holmdale, Katherine feeling a strange thrill as she looked at the man who, under heaven, had been the means of saving Philip Reynell's life.

A conversation ensued, during which the doctor explained the part he had taken in Philip Reynell's illness; and also mentioned his visit to Philip and his wife while they were in Paris; and it was finally settled that Mr. and Mrs. Hastings should join the party at Harbledon in a week from that day, and that Captain Haughton should, in the meantime, try and find out what he could of Philip Reynell's movements.

"I wish the Springers would come home," he thought. "I should like to know something about his life out there—some one will be sure to know what the mystery is."

His heart gave a great leap, as he read in the Times, on his way to his sister's, that Her Majesty's 62d Regiment was even then *en route* for England.

Mrs. Armdale, a cheery, bright little woman, who loved to have her house full of company, welcomed her brother and his friend with effusion, and told him with glee that Harbledon would be crammed.

"We shan't have room to put a mouse," she said, excitedly. "Arnold gave me *carte blanche*. Who do you think is coming, Bertie?"

"Couldn't guess, sister dear. The Khan of Tartary, perhaps—it wouldn't be an impossibility if you took it into your wise little head."

"Don't laugh at me, Bertie—it is a friend of yours."

"Of mine, eh?"

"Yes; Mr. Reynell, that you used to make such a fuss about. Arnold and I met them in Paris—I like his wife so much! Why, how you look, just as if you didn't like it."

"I'm afraid my friend won't."

"What friend?"

"Mrs. Hastings."

"Why?"

"Only because she is the lady who came ten thousand miles to marry him, and found him false—that's all. I'm afraid the meeting won't be a very pleasant one."

"Oh, my!" exclaimed Mrs. Armdale. "What shall we do?"

"Nothing, my dear—it is too late. They must have met sooner or later—as well now and here as anywhere else."

CHAPTER XXIX.

HOME AGAIN.

Speed, speed thou fleet vessel, the shores are in sight,
The breezes are fair, we shall anchor to-night;
To-morrow, at sunrise, once more I shall stand
On the sea-beaten shores of my own native land.
—*Haynes Bayley.*

"Do you think it will fire you too much to go with me to Portsmouth, Kate?" asked Mr. Hastings, two days before they were expected at Harbledon.

"Portsmouth, dear—why?"

"I have some business there that won't wait. We shall only be a day later at Mrs. Armdale's—Haughton will make our apologies for us."

"I shall like to go, Harry. I have never been there since I landed from the Penelope. Oh, how unhappy I was then!"

"Unhappy, darling! *Then!*"

"Yes. I felt a sort of presentiment that Philip would not be there. I don't know what I dreaded; and then came the blow of my uncle's death, and all the misery I suffered in London. But it led me to you, Harry—but for that dreadful time I should never have met you."

"And never been 'Simla.' Whatever is, is right; be sure of that, Kate."

He had been reading the paper before he spoke, and put it away where it should not meet his wife's eye. Had she taken it up, she would have seen his reason for this sudden journey; but she scarcely ever picked up a paper, except to read the criticisms on her books as they came out.

She had written three now, and "Simla" was beginning to be a household name among readers of light literature. She received many letters through Mr. Compton, such as authors love to see—telling her how her words had gone home to many a heart, and cheered many a lonely life. Her own sorrows had made her graphic in description and sympathetic in style, and "Simla's" books were never laid aside unread.

Out in India, when the ladies of the 62d received their welcome boxes of books from Bombay or Calcutta, the familiar sentiments and words, the bits of racy description of their own ways and customs, made their hearts thrill with a strange feeling of sympathy with the unknown writer.

"Look here, my dear," said Mrs. Sloper to Mrs. Scorby, looking up from a new book with the tears in her eyes, "*who* is 'Simla?'"

"I can't think. I read a book of his that came out by the last mail, 'In the shadow of the Flag.' It *must* be the Springers he was in."

"I don't think it's a man," Mrs. Sloper said; "here's a story here of a corporal's baby that no man could write."

"There's been no woman of ours, in my time, capable of doing such a thing, except Kate Branscombe. Poor Kate! I wonder what has become of her?"

"Oh, she's with her friends, of course! I wonder if we shall see Philip Reynell when we get home? I shall give him a piece of my mind if I ever do meet him."

Mrs. Sloper was to the full as indignant as her friend at Philip Reynell's conduct to Katherine, and she rather looked to meeting him and putting him to shame by a few stinging words regarding his conduct to the young lady she had once hoped to call her daughter-in-law.

Her son had not married well; he had grown reckless, and plunged headlong into the most careless of the society by which he was surrounded, and his mother was very fond of saying that if he had married the colonel's daughter he would have been a different man. She looked upon Philip Reynell as the marplot who had spoiled all her arrangements, and longed for some way of "serving him out," as she expressed it. She was a little sore with Katherine, too; she thought that she might have written to her old friends, and she set her down as "stuck up" because of her silence.

The news of Mr. Underwood's death reached India in due course; but those of the ladies who knew he was the uncle to whom the orphan girl had gone, had no idea but what her fortune was still safe, and that she was still living in affluence somewhere in England.

The regiment had left Allahabad, and was stationed at Gwalior, in Central India, from which unfoomfortable station they expected to be sent home. The two ladies shared the same bungalow now—or, rather, their bungalows joined—and, neither of them having any children, they were much together. They joined in their library subscriptions, their papers, and the amusements which were got up to while away the weary hours of their Indian life. They were much better friends than of yore; one by one the rest of the circle over which Colonel Branscombe had presided had dropped off, and they were almost alone. Mrs. Scorby dived deep into the case of books which the bearer had opened, and took up a volume of the one her friend was already deep in.

"'Severed Fortunes,'" she read, by 'Simla.' Have you the first?"

Mrs. Sloper nodded. She was far too absorbed in her book to talk, and her tears were falling over it.

Mrs. Scorby did not wait for her friend to finish the first volume, but took the second, and ensconced herself under the verandah. Suddenly she uttered an exclamation.

"What is it?" asked her friend.

"Either Katherine Branscombe or Philip Reynell wrote this story! Here is the tale of the colonel's death, and what we were doing on that Christmas Day, all told in such a pretty way; and here's another chapter about the voyage home, and all that. It must be Katherine; but whatever could have made her turn authoress?"

"'Compton & Co., Paternoster-row,'" Mrs. Sloper read from the title-page of her volume. "We shall soon find out from them who 'Simla' is."

The long-expected orders for home came to the 62d very late in the year. They were *en route* during all the events of the last few chapters; but the news of the birth of an heir to the Reynell name and fortunes had reached India before the regiment started.

Mrs. Scorby's correspondent—the same lady who had notified to her Philip's coming marriage—informed her that there seemed a shadow over Boscobel that no one could quite make out. The young wife did not seem so full of happiness as at first. Her husband was moody, and the ruling power in the house seemed to be a foreign servant, whose will in everything appeared to be law.

The curiosity of the two ladies was whetted to an unbearable degree by these details, and they longed to be at home to solve the mystery.

Katherine knew nothing of her husband's business in Portsmouth, and never dreamed, when he settled her in a comfortable hotel, that the journey had reference to aught save business. Idly she looked out of the window, wondering at the part of the town in which she found herself, and thinking of the day when she had driven, in her desolation, from the docks to the station. Then she was alone and friendless; now her fortune looked bright and clear before her.

Suddenly something in the street caught her eye—a group of men, bronzed and bearded, followed by troops of street *gamins* and idle girls. Katherine's heart leaped; they wore the old familiar scarlet uniform, with its yellow facings, and not a few of them had the white helmets, which looked to her like old friends, and which pieces of martial gear were already being appropriated by exultant boys, who fancied themselves soldiers and heroes when invested with their pith and calico trophies.

"Why, they are the 62d, Harry. Ours is come home," she said, leaning half out of the window to see the last of the retreating figures. "Oh, I wonder where the dear old major and his wife are!"

"Not far off, my dear," said a familiar voice close behind her, and turning round, she was clasped in the fat arms of Mrs. Scorby, and the major's great hands were stroking her hair in a bovine attempt to express how very glad he was to see her.

Mrs. Sloper was there, too. Her husband was on duty at the ship the troops had returned in, and Katherine's full heart ran over in joyful tears at the sight of her old friends. Her husband had planned this pleasant surprise for her. Knowing that the 62d were coming home, and that her old friends were with them, he had determined to be at Portsmouth to receive them, and let Katherine have a chance of meeting with them. How long they talked, and what stories they had to tell and remembrances to call up, only long-severed friends can tell.

The secret of "Simla's" identity leaked out, and the two India ladies promised secrecy, and kept their promise so faithfully that in three months' time every one that they could possibly tell knew that the popular authoress was Mrs. Hastings of Holmdale.

The major and his wife took up their quarters in the same hotel for a night, and Katherine had time for a long talk with her old friend. She told her all her story—spoke, as she could now, with calmness of her uncle's death, and her aunt's altered fortunes, and then of her husband with the reverent love which, coming from a woman's lips, tells of heartwhole devotion and contentment. She was perfectly happy, they could see; and more than ever they wondered at Philip Reynell.

"You'll come and see the old ship to-morrow?" the major said, when they parted for the night. "You didn't come home in a troop-ship, Kate. I beg your pardon—Mrs. Hastings."

"Kate, if you please," she said, joyously. "Always Kate to you. I shall feel as though there was nothing wanting in my life now the old regiment is come home. I must come to Aldershott and see all the women and the babies. They won't have forgotten me, I think."

"Forgotten? Why, your name is a household word, my dear," said the major, kindly. "They'll fall down and worship you—all the more that they don't like Mrs. Temple."

Mrs. Temple was the new colonel's wife, who looked upon her husband's troopers as creatures of an inferior order, and passed by on the other side when the little colony of women at the quarters were in any trouble. She never entered a soldier's house with words of comfort on her lips and help in her hands. She kept aloof, as became an earl's daughter; and they only knew her as a fine lady, whose carriage wheels might harm their children unless they were kept out of the way.

There was no getting into the colonel's way now with the certainty of a kindly nod or smile, or perhaps even a word from the ruler of their destinies. Colonel Temple never patted a child on the head, or asked a burdened mother how many she had. They all had to clear out when his voice was heard or his step came near. They mourned their old colonel deep down in their hearts, and built him up a lasting monument of love and honor in their simple faith, which should last to all eternity, and be bright and fresh long after the things of this world should have faded and died.

Major Scorby came into breakfast in a state of great excitement.

"Who do you think I have seen?" he asked.

"Who?" asked Mr. Hastings.

"Philip Reynell."

"No!"

"I have! I beg your pardon, my dear Mrs. Hastings, for mentioning his name, but I have—"

"His name is nothing to me now," she said, laying her hand on her husband's as she spoke. "I could meet him now without a twinge. I hope I never may, but I could. Where did you see him, major?"

"Down at the docks. It seems he expected some goods by the Simla—the ship's your namesake, Kate—and has come to see for them. Some boxes he left in India, he says."

"He did leave some," Katherine replied. "I never heard what became of them. Did you speak to him, major?"

"Speak to him—of course I did! I shouldn't have known him. You see, I was down at the docks—the early morning's the time to see them in great quiet—and I met two gentlemen going on board the ship. I didn't notice them particularly, till one of them said, 'It's your old regiment, Reynell, that has come in her, isn't it?' and then I turned round. It was Phil Reynell sure enough, though he's grown a big beard, and is a good deal altered.

"I beg your pardon, I said; 'but surely you know me—Major Scorby?'

"He took my hand in a moment."

"'I didn't see you,' he said. 'Know you! I should be a heartless, ungrateful fellow if I didn't remember such a friend as you were to me in the old times!'

"The words were hearty enough, but somehow they wanted the old ring, and his voice is quite changed—it is deeper and rougher than it used to be. He asked after you, Bessie, and Captain and Mrs. Sloper; but he seemed constrained and nervous. I asked him why he had never written to any of us, and he laughed; but it was a hard, bitter sort of laugh.

"'I felt very guilty in the matter of Miss Branscombe,' he said. 'I was sure I was being harshly judged.'

"'Not more than you deserved,' I said—I couldn't have helped it, Kate, to save my life—and he winced at the words.

"'My wife must be my excuse,' he said, in a nervous sort of way. 'I shall hope to have the pleasure of introducing her to you some day. Miss Branscombe is happily married. I know that much, so I do not feel so uncomfortable about the affair as perhaps I ought.'

"His manner was so queer that I didn't know what to make of him. He never looked at me while he spoke, and fidgeted with his hands in a nervous sort of way that made me feel quite uncomfortable. I think he's got into some scrape since he came to England, and does not want to face his old friends."

"He's spoken of as a perfect pattern of a landlord," Mr. Hastings remarked. "I'm glad some one is come home who knew him in India. You can identify him, of course?"

"Identify him! Why, I knew him out there as well as if he were my own son. The Reynell face is peculiar—I should know him anywhere. He's under a cloud somehow—I am sure of it."

"That is what we all fancy! But what makes you think so?"

"He said, in a laughing sort of way, that he didn't want any one to know he was come here. He said he couldn't ask his old friends to Boscobel just yet, and didn't like to seem inhospitable, or something of that sort—I didn't quite catch it—and then he shook hands with me quite hurriedly and went away."

"I'm afraid there's something more serious to be cleared up," Mr. Hastings remarked, when Katherine and Mrs. Scorby had retired to dress. "Did you know Reynell's servant, Edwards?"

"Know him! Why, he had him from me—as good a fellow as ever wore uniform. He is with him still, I suppose—is he not?"

"No; he is with me. I am responsible for him as a lunatic."

"A lunatic? Nonsense! Edwards was not the sort of man to go mad."

"He has been shut up as a lunatic for seventeen months by his master's orders, I opine, though he is not clear upon that point. But he shall tell you his story himself."

"He is here?"

"He will go everywhere with me till some clue to the mystery at Boscobel—for there is one—is obtained. Here he is."

Edwards was delighted to see the major; and to say that that gentleman was as-

finished at the story Philip Reynell's batman had to tell him, would be but feebly to express what he felt.

"Something wrong!" he exclaimed; "something damnable! Do you think that the secret of his life is murder, and that he murdered that poor devil of a servant of his?"

The Recording Angel, who blots out the record of human oaths with tears, had usually a good many to weep over Major Scorby's failings in that respect; but in this instance he might be excused if the tears did not fall, the explosion was so natural, and, perchance, was never written down at all.

"I can't imagine. The idea entered my wife's head, and made her feel quite ill. I cannot see the motive for such an act."

"Nor I, unless the poor fellow had hold of some shameful secret of his; and yet I could have sworn that if ever man had led a pure life, without any shameful past in it, it was my old friend Reynell's son. How we can be deceived to be sure!"

The entrance of the ladies put a stop to their conversation for the time, but Mr. Hastings felt that they had secured an important ally in Major Scorby, to assist them in finding out the secret of Philip Reynell's life.

CHAPTER XXX.

AT LAST.

Love, hope, and joy alike adieu;
Would I could add remembrance too. —*Byron.*

The Simla was all in confusion when the party went on board, but they were most courteously received, and Major Scorby was in his glory showing his friends over her. He had a hobby—the improvement of the army transports—and he pointed out every appliance for cleanliness and order, every mode of averting danger and saving life, with the air of a *cicerone* exhibiting a public building.

"We've had many a bit of fun here," Mrs. Scorby said, as they sat down in the saloon over a glass of champagne, "I remember. We used to have games of an evening, and dances. Several of our gentlemen were musical, and we got up some very pretty concerts. Bless me, major, what's the matter?" for the major had started up in a tremendous hurry, upsetting his glass into his wife's lap. "There's a mess! What a tiresome man you are!"

"I beg your pardon, my dear," looking ruefully at the stream of wine; "it's only some one I want to speak to. "Keep your wife here, Mr. Hastings," he added, in a whisper; "it's Reynell."

He bustled out, followed by his wife, who had no idea of letting the major go anywhere within her cognizance without her.

Philip Reynell did not seem particularly well pleased at meeting the major again.

"I had no idea you were here," he said. "We were just going ashore."

"Without speaking to me, Philip Reynell?" Mrs Scorby asked. "Have you forgotten all your old friends?"

"I could never forget you," he said, with *empressement*. "I had no idea you were on board."

He shook hands with her; but the nervousness her husband had spoken of, was very apparent.

"I have just been talking to Captain Sloper," he said. "He hardly knew me. He says Mrs. Sloper is here."

"Yes, and another old friend of yours. Perhaps you'd like to see her?"

"Who?"

"Kate Branscombe."

However heartless he had been in his conduct to Kate, the mention of her name affected him painfully. He turned ashy pale and clutched the hand rail of the steps he was standing on, as though the words had made him faint and sick.

"No, I do not want to see her," he said; "that is, I don't suppose she wants to see me."

"No, I should not think she did," Mrs. Scorby replied. "Are you not ashamed of yourself, Philip Reynell? You broke her heart."

"It has been repaired since," he said, with a sneer, so foreign to what she remembered of him that she started aghast at the change it produced in his handsome face. "Mrs. Hastings is quoted as a very happy wife.'

"And if she is, it is no thanks to you. You ought to be ashamed of what you have done. Poor Kate! she loved you dearly once."

"I am ashamed, madam—as much as a man can be. All the remorse that man can feel I have felt over that unfortunate affair. We are not masters of ourselves sometimes, and, as I told the major here, my wife's love and beauty must plead for me. As it happened, it has turned out for the best. In Mr. Hastings Miss Branscombe has found a much more suitable husband than I should have made her. Maybe she has been spared much sorrow—who knows?"

"I daresay she has," Mrs. Scorby said, grimly; and Philip and his friend hurried off, just as the rest of the party emerged from the saloon.

"Who do you think it was?" the major's wife asked of Kate, as they stood a little apart from the rest of the party, waiting to go ashore.

"I don't know. Who?"

"Philip Reynell."

"He!—here!"

"Yes, my dear, here, on board this ship. Ah! I'm sorry I told you—you look quite faint."

"I wish him no ill," returned Katherine, slowly, "but I hope the Fates will keep us apart. Don't fancy I have a single feeling for him now except contempt. It was the memory of the dear old times in India brought these tears—not of him and his pretended love."

She was her own calm self again by the time her husband joined her, and able to tell him, without a tremor in her voice, how near she had been to meeting Philip Reynell.

"I am glad you didn't, dear," was all the reply he made, feeling inwardly as though he should very much like to meet Mr. Reynell and break his neck if occasion offered.

The friends parted at Portsmouth with many promises of meeting again soon. The regiment went its way to Aldershott, and Katherine and her husband started for Harbledon, which was as pretty a country seat as could be found in all pretty Warwickshire.

Mrs. Armdale received them with a hearty welcome. Her husband was there to introduce them, and she fluttered about Katherine with real pleasure, proud of having a real live authoress under her roof, and of being able to tell all her bosom friends what a delightful creature "Simla" was.

She was a *petite* woman, with flowing draperies of lace and ribbon, and feathery brown curls, surmounted by a morsel of lace and ribbon which she called a cap. The prevailing color about her was pink, and she looked as fresh and as pretty as the wild hedge-roses just beginning to open in such countless profusion in the Warwickshire lanes and meadows. Katherine felt at home with her directly when she was ensconced in a pretty bedroom, with a balcony opening on to the lawn, and the snuggest of boudoirs attached to it. Everything about her breathed of the purity and freshness which seemed to hang over the gushing little mistress of the house—for Mrs. Armdale did "gush," in spite of her thirty-two years, though it was in a womanly, warm way, that no one could take exception to.

There was an hour before the dressing-bell would ring, and she bestowed it all upon her new acquaintance, telling her what they were going to do in the way of amusement.

In the course of the conversation Mr. Hastings came in, and Mrs. Armdale being called away, remained a short time discussing with his wife a circumstance which had just occurred, which caused them no small amount of wonderment, and of which we shall have more to say hereafter. The time slipped away till they heard the voice of their hostess.

"The dinner-bell will ring in a minute, good people," she said, putting in her head and part of her little body, gorgeously got up in pale blue satin. "Are you dressed, Mrs. Hastings?"

"I am not," said her husband, beating a retreat. "I feel very guilty, but I have been gossiping with my wife."

Mrs. Armdale was obliged to run away too, after informing Katherine, much to her surprise, though she said nothing, that the Reynells were expected on the same day.

The dinner, like all other dinners, came and passed, and after it was over, when the ladies had retired to the drawing-room, the sound of approaching wheels announced a visitor.

"It is the Reynells," Mrs. Armdale said. "You don't know her, do you, Mrs. Hastings?"

"No," replied Katherine.

She could hardly bring her dry lips to form the little word, and, making some excuse, she left the room. She had said that she could meet her faithless lover calmly—he was nothing to her now—she cared nothing for him or his movements; but, now that the moment of meeting had come, a rush of old memories made her eyes dim and her lips quiver with an agitation she could not repress.

"They all know my story," she said to herself; "I must meet him calmly, or not at all."

And she stole to her own room, to have one minute to herself, for the traces of wounded pride, of bitter retrospection, that would come in spite of her judgment. There was no one there, and she drew aside the window curtains, and watched the arrival. She saw a figure in a light overcoat toss the reins of a pair of bays to the groom in attendance, and hand down a lady upon whose fair face and waving hair the light of the hall lamp shone full and clear. Katherine's lip curled with a touch of scorn.

"He could turn from *me* to *her!*" she said, bitterly; and, indeed, poor Gwendoline's pale, weary-looking face looked anything but attractive after her journey. She had not seen *his* face yet, but as the thought flashed through her mind, he looked straight up to where she sat, little dreaming that the woman he had wronged was within earshot of his voice.

It was a harder face than the Philip of old days ever wore—he had grown a beard, as Major Scorby had said, but it moved her strangely. Her eyes seemed starting with the intensity of her gaze, and her limbs felt as if they were turning into stone as she looked at him. She heard Mr. Armdale greet him as Mr. Reynell, and saw the company crowd out with joyful welcome, and accompany him into the house, and still she sat blankly staring out into the still night, with a sick void in her heart which no light or warmth could ever fill up.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

MY UGLY WART.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MAY MEREDITH.

I had just risen from the piano, and taken my seat by a window opening on the piazza. I knew I had done full justice to myself this evening, and the low murmurs of applause which greeted me as I left the instrument, seemed but a fitting reward for my performance. I played beautifully; indeed, I could hardly help doing so, for the best masters had been chosen for my instruction, and my taste for music, naturally very great, had been cultivated to the highest pitch. This evening I had tried to do my very best, for some kind friend had told me that Willie Potter—who had just returned from Europe—was an excellent judge of music, and that he treated with indifference the accounts he had heard of my talent.

"If Miss Thurston plays really well I shall be very much surprised," he had remarked: and that speech being repeated to me, who wonders that I determined to show him what I could do?

At my side stood Richmond Pearson, whispering pretty compliments and sweet speeches to me, but I was tired of his flattery, and wishing to rid myself of him for a moment, asked him to get me a glass of water. He bowed low, murmured something about the honor and pleasure of waiting on me, and left me to perform my behest.

The room was warm, and I turned toward the open window. The piazza was filled with promenaders; on the steps and the pretty rustic porch-chairs couples were seated, and flirting and fun seemed the order of the evening.

"Did she not play exquisitely?" I heard a voice say. "I had no idea I should have the pleasure of listening to such good music, and I think I must retract the opinion I once expressed of her musical talent. I had not heard her then, and, in truth, had no right to express an opinion."

"She is certainly a fine musician," another voice answered, and I recognized Belle Hinton's haughty tones; "but I prefer a different style."

There was a moment's silence, and then the man spoke.

"Miss Belle, what perfect hands Miss Thurston would have but for the huge, ugly wart on the left one, which so completely disfigures it."

The color rushed to my face. He had been standing near me, then, while I played, and had noticed that horrid wart! How I hated it! But I had no time to think, for he continued:

"Of all things, I admire a beautiful hand; and I have often said I would never ask a woman to marry me whose hands were not truly pretty. Like yours, for instance, Miss Belle." And then followed a few words I did not catch, and I think, or perhaps I fancied, I heard a kiss imprinted on one of the hands so much admired.

"Ah! Willie Potter," I said to myself, "I will make you beg yet for the hand with the huge, ugly wart, and beg, too, in vain." And that evening, when Mr. Potter was introduced to me, I began my task of flirting with him.

It was not hard work; he, evidently, had spent much time in ladies' society, and knew well how to please them.

That night, as I fell asleep, I determined more positively than ever that Willie Potter should address me, and should receive from me a decided answer in the negative.

Ah! how little we think when we play and toy with the god-child, Cupid, of the power for good and ill he, the blind boy, holds in his tiny hands!

And so the days wore on, and forgetful of the risk to myself, I rode, walked, talked and laughed with Mr. Potter, till each day grew brighter than the preceding one, and my life seemed one long ray of sunshine. But it could not last. One night, as we were seated on the piazza alone, Willie told me of his love. How the words thrilled me, and how I wished to confess that my heart was his in return! But the moment I had longed for was here, and now it would never do for me to falter in my refusal.

"Indeed, Mr. Potter, how can you address a young lady whose hands are not 'truly pretty?' Have I not heard you say you would never ask a woman to marry you, who had not a perfect hand; and a hand, you kow, with a 'huge wart' on it, can never be pretty? Belle Hinton's, for instance, would suit you better," and I paused to see the effect of my words.

"Nellie, my darling," he murmured, "you know I do not care for Belle Hinton; and this precious hand, with its ugly wart, is dearer far to me and more beautiful than any in the world. Nellie, say that I may call you my own; and let me prove, by a life of devotion, the love I feel for you!"

"No, Mr. Potter," I answered, "it must never be!"

How cold my voice sounded, but how my heart beat! Would he take this for a final decision, or would he plead on? Ah! love, true and strong as his, could not so easily be repulsed; and ere long I felt I must give way, unless he left me.

"Nellie," he whispered, "you love me—I have seen it, darling, and the knowledge has made me happier than words can express. Why wound yourself and me, by refusing me the hand I beg for? Say, my precious one, that you will be mine."

It was hard to resist him; but, I answered—

"No, no, I won't be yours—I can't be yours till this hateful wart is gone! I overheard you say you would never marry a woman whose hand was not pretty—and while this wart is here, mine cannot be so. I vowed I would make you address me, make you beg for my hand, wart and all—and I have done so; but I vowed, too, that I would refuse you."

"Foolish girl," he said bitterly, as he pushed me from him, "I thought I loved a noble, true-hearted woman, and now I find my ideal a child. A silly child, too, who wins a man's love and then throws it away because he does not think her hand as pretty as she wishes, and because she has said she would not accept his heart! And think you, child, that you, too, will not suffer for your vanity?"

Here I interrupted him:

"Enough, Mr. Potter! You may congratulate yourself that the child, the silly, vain child, has decided not to link her fate to yours, for perchance she might bring you misery instead of happiness. As for my suffering, don't let that trouble you. I think I can bear all the pain in store for me. Will you leave me, please?"

I rose as I spoke, but before I knew it, he had drawn me to his heart and imprinted kiss after kiss on my lips and brow.

"Go now," he said, rudely thrusting me aside, and as I turned quickly away, he added bitterly, oh! so bitterly: "And, Nellie, when that wart is gone, let me know. Perhaps I may come back to you."

Ah! I was indeed a silly, vain child as he said. But it was too late now; I should never see him again, and I must be brave and bear the woe my foolish vanity had brought me!

"Mammy," I said one day to my old colored nurse, "Lucy told me yesterday that you had the power of taking away warts from a person. I wish you would fly away with this one of mine," and I looked rather reproachfully at my left hand, which had brought me so much trouble.

"Lor' bless you, honey! Lucy do tell fibs. But jist lem me see yer hand. It won't do no harm fur a ole 'oman the likes 'ev me to look at it."

I gave her my hand, and she gazed long and earnestly at it; then rose and left the room without a word.

I did not think for a moment, that the negro superstition that some of the old women of their race have the weird art of spiriting away warts, would be of avail to me, but, reader, strange as it may seem, ere two weeks had elapsed, my ugly wart had disappeared, and my hands—both of them now—were indeed, faultlessly beautiful.

"And are you sure, Miss Nellie," said Richmond Pearson, as we reached the depot together one fine afternoon, "that you are not afraid to travel alone? But say the word, and you know it will be a great pleasure for me to accompany you."

"Afraid, Mr. Pearson! Indeed, I was never afraid of anything, and truly I could not think of taking you away from the many important cases which occupy your time!"

Richmond Pearson looked flattered. Evidently, he did not see the twinkle in my eye.

"Indeed, Miss Nellie, "he began, "you do me too much honor when you call the few legal cases intrusted to me—" but here, the whistle of the approaching train interrupted the young lawyer, and a moment after he was bidding me an impressive good-bye, through the car window.

As the train moved off, I drew down my veil and leaned my head on my hand, when I noticed that I had not on my gloves. I felt for them, first in my muff, then in my pocket, and travelling-bag, but, nowhere were they to be found. I did not mind it much though, as I never could bear to wear them, and soon I forgot that my hands were uncovered.

We passed station after station, and I was nearing my journey's end. At Lamotte, several ladies and gentlemen entered the car I was in, but I scarcely noticed that one couple took the seat just behind me, till I heard a soft, sweet voice whisper—

"Look, Willie dear; did you ever see such a lovely hand?"

"Yes, Annie," answered a strangely familiar voice. "Once before have I seen one as beautiful. But we must have been speaking too loud; for see, the lady has changed her seat."

I had indeed risen and moved to an empty seat ahead. How could I bear to have him so near? Ah me! The old pain I thought so nearly conquered, needed but one little touch to ache again with the same agony. And was she his wife? I thought how sweet her voice had sounded, and determined to have one look; but my intention was frustrated, for a moment afterwards the train stopped, the brakeman called out "Franklin," and I rose and passed out across the platform and into the ladies' room. There I expected to find Cousin Charlie waiting for me, but I saw no sign of him, and supposing the train was in earlier than usual, I sat down to wait his arrival. But the minutes passed on; trains came and went, men walked in and out, and still I waited. The short winter's day was drawing to a close now, and I must either take the next train home, or call a carriage and drive to Cousin Charlie's house. I decided upon the latter course; and with the intention of calling a cab, walked to the door. A gentleman was standing there, and I started as my eyes met his, and I recognized Willie Potter.

"Miss Thurston," he said, advancing, "can I be of service to you?"

I told him my need, and in a few moments he returned and said a hack was waiting.

"May I come, too?" he asked, as he placed me in the carriage.

I bowed my head, for I would not trust myself to speak, and the next instant he was beside me. I had read the old tale of love in his eyes, and that reading had brought me infinite happiness.

"Nellie," he said, gently, "you were seated before me in the train this afternoon, and I saw your left hand. Darling, is not the wart gone?"

"Yes, Willie," I whispered.

"And the hand?" he asked.

"Is yours now, Willie; now and forever."

Ah, reader, the happiness of that moment seemed to make up for all I had suffered!

"And she is not your wife," I said after awhile.

"No, darling," he answered, drawing me closer to him, "only a cousin, and I expect she wonders what important business has kept me so long at the depot. You see when I recognized you, my precious one, I could not give you up again."

"Oh, Willie," I murmured, "if you only knew what I have gone through, the pain my silly pride has caused me, you would feel sorry for me."

"And I too have suffered," he answered; "but, darling one, the 'ugly wart' is gone, and with it all our unhappiness!"

A PUZZLE FOR PHILOSOPHERS.

Mr. Darwin and other scientific men who have adopted his theory of the origin of species, have given very plausible explanations of various physical peculiarities of men and animals. Thus the white color of the Polar bear, and the green hue of certain butterflies, are intelligently accounted for upon the thory of "the survival of the fittest." There are however, a number of phenomena which are yet wholly without explanation, and to which Mr. Darwin's attention might profitably be turned. Among these is the problem why the W. H. Johnsons, of New England, should be characterized by glass eyes?

The existence of this curious phenomenon was very recently brought to light by certain detective police officers of Boston. These officers were despatched throughout New England in search of one W. H. Johnson, a man whose acquaintance the authorities of Boston desired to make, and whose distinguishing feature was a glass eye—if, indeed, an artificial eye is entitled to be called a feature. It will hardly be credited that the detectives acutually met no less than four different men, each of whom bore the name of W. H. Johnson, and each of whom possessed a glass eye. Moreover, none of these Johnsons was the particular Johnson for whom they were searching; neither was a fifth W. H. Johnson, also with a glass eye, of whose existence they learned, but whom they did not actually meet—the Johnson in demand. Now, here were five men, each bearing the same name, and each addicted to glass eyes. Surely we have sufficient data for assuming that in New England, if not elsewhere, that species of the human race known as "W. H. Johnson" is distinguished by the invariable characteristic of a glass eye.

How to account for this curious fact is a task which it is obvious that scientific persons alone are competent to undertake. Probably Mr. Darwin would explain it by his pet hypothesis of the survival of the fittest. He would assume that certain natural laws gradually brought about the extinction of W. H. Johnsons with normal eyes, and that inasmuch as these causes do not affect W. H. Johnsons with glass eyes, the latter have survived to be the only representatives of the W. H. Johnson species. This would be an entirely satisfactory explanation, did it include a statement of the particular causes that have led to this result. The unscientific mind finds it impossible to conjecture what could have been the precise natural laws which were hostile to the existence of the naturally-eyed W. H. Johnsons; and it is greatly to be feared that even were Mr. Darwin himself to undertake to define them, his definition would be purely conjectural, and hence eminently inconclusive. Still, the problem, difficult as it seems to be, is one which ought to command the attention of every fearless scientific investigator. The Boston detectives in collecting five specimens of glass-eyed W. H. Johnsons have done a service to science. The obvious generalization that all New England W. H. Johnsons are glass-eyed, has already forced itself upon every thoughtful mind. It remains for scientific persons to grapple with these facts, and to find their true and only explanation.

PARENTS are protesting against the custom of keeping children after school hours as a punishment for failure in lessons. It certainly must be well understood, in this age of the world, that the physical welfare of a child is as important as the mental progress. Long-continued confinement and protracted mental strain are highly injurious. How is a child who is subjected to extra confinement and extra hours of study in the school-room, to be prepared for fresh, vigorous attention to lessons the next day?

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☞ A Baltimore couple did their courting in adjacent cells, and were engaged before seeing each other.

☞ A man and a father named Smith, recently traded five children for a saw-mill, but his heart failed him the next day, especially when he found the saw needed filing, and he insisted on having one child or eight dollars returned to him to comfort him in his old age. We are happy to state Mrs. Smith died last year.—*St. Louis Democrat.*

☞ Bill Jones, of Milwaukee, held a gentleman's coat for him so long that the police magistrate was obliged to hold him in $500 bail.

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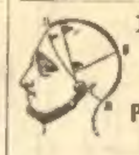

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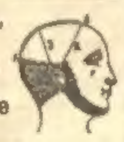

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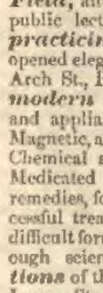

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WIT AND HUMOR

SEAFARING.

My envious rivals have always sought to cast discredit upon the following tale by affirming that mere unadorned truth does not constitute a work of literary merit. Be it so; I care not what they call it. A rose with any other smell would be as sweet.

In the autumn of 1868 I wanted to go from Sacramento, California, to San Francisco. I at once went to the railway office and bought a ticket, the clerk telling me that it would take me there. But when I tried it it wouldn't. Vainly I laid it on the railway, and sat down upon it; it would not move; and every few minutes an engine would come along and crowd me off the track. I never travelled by so badly managed a line!

I then resolved to go by way of the river, and took passage on a steamboat. The engineer of this boat had once been a candidate for the State Legislature while I was editing a newspaper. Stung to madness by the arguments I had advanced against his election (which consisted mainly in relating how that his cousin was hanged for horse-stealing, and how that his sister had an intolerable squint which a free people would never abide) he had sworn to be revenged. After his defeat I had confessed that the charges were false, so far as he personally was concerned, but this did not seem to appease him. He declared he would get even on me, and he did; he blew up the boat.

Being thus summarily set ashore, I determined that I would be independent of common carriers destitute of common courtesy. I purchased a wooden box just large enough to admit one, and not transferable. I lay down in this, double-locked it on the outside, and carrying it to the river, launched it upon the watery waste. The box, I soon discovered, had a hereditary tendency to turn over. I had parted my hair in the middle before embarking, but the precaution was inadequate; it secured not immunity, only impartiality; the box turning over one way as readily as the other. I could counteract this evil only by shifting my tobacco from cheek to cheek, and in this way I got on tolerably well until my navy sprang a leak near the stern.

I now began to wish I had not locked down the cover; I could have got out and walked ashore. But it was childish to give way to unavailing regrets; so I lay perfectly quiet and yelled. Presently I thought of my jack-knife. By this time the ship was so water-logged as to be a little more stable. This enabled me to get the knife from my pocket without upsetting more than six or eight times, and inspired hope. Taking the whittle between my teeth I turned over upon my stomach, and cut a hole through the bottom near the bow. Turning back again I awaited the result. Most men would have awaited the result, I think, if they could not have got out. For some time there was no result. The ship was too deeply laden astern—where my feet were—and water will not run up-hill unless it is paid to do it. But when I called in all my faculties for a good earnest think, the weight of my intellect turned the scale. It was like a cargo of pig lead in the forecastle. The water, which for nearly an hour I had kept down by drinking it as it rose about my lips, began to run out at the hole I had scuttled faster than it could be admitted at the one in the stern; and in a few moments the bottom was so dry you might have lighted a match upon it, if you had been there and obtained the captain's permission.

I was all right now. I had got into San Pablo Bay, where it was all plain sailing. If I could manage to keep off the horizon I should be somewhere before daylight. But a new annoyance was in store for me. The steamboats on these waters are constructed of very frail materials, and whenever one came into collision with my flotilla she immediately sank. This was exasperating, for the piercing shrieks of the hapless crews and passengers prevented my getting any sleep. Such disagreeable voices as these people had would have tortured an ear of corn. I felt as if I would like to step out and beat them soft-headed with a club; though of course I had not the heart to do so while the padlock held fast.

The reader—if he is obliging—will remember that there was formerly an obstruction in the harbor of San Francisco called Blossom Rock, which was some fathoms under water, but not fathoms enough to suit shipmasters. It was removed by an engineer named Von Schmidt. This person bored a hole in it and sent down some men who gnawed out the whole interior, leaving the rock a mere shell. Into this drawing-room suite were inserted thirty tons of powder, ten barrels of nitro-glycerine, and a woman's temper. Von Schmidt then put in something explosive and corked up the opening, leaving a long wire hanging out. When all these preparations were complete the inhabitants of San Francisco came out to see the fun. They perched thickly upon Telegraph Hill from base to summit; they swarmed innumerable upon the beach; the whole region was black with them. All that day they waited, and came again the next. Again they were disappointed, and again they returned full of hope.

For three long weeks they did nothing but squat upon that eminence, looking fixedly at the wrong place. But when it transpired that Von Schmidt had hastily left the State directly he had completed his preparations, leaving the wire floating in the water, in the hope that some electrical eel might swim against it and ignite the explosives, the people began to abate their ardor and move out of town. They said it might be a good while before a qualified gymnotus would pass that way, although the State Ichthyologer assured them he had put some eels' eggs into the head waters of the Sacramento River not two weeks previously. But the country was very beautiful at that time of the year, and the people would not wait. So when the explosion really occurred there wasn't anybody in the vicinity to witness it. It was a stupendous explosion, all the same, as the unhappy gymnotus discovered to his cost.

Now I have often thought that if this mighty convulsion had occurred a year or two earlier than it really did it would have been bad for me, but I floated idly by, unconscious of danger. As it was, my little bark was carried out into the broad Pacific, and sank in ten thousand fathoms of the coldest water—it makes my teeth chatter to think of it!

INCONSTANCY.

BY ELIZABETH AKERS ALLEN.

Against the curtained pane, beloved,
The snow beats thick and fast,
The wild wind's sorrowful refrain
Is telling of the past—
And in the old familiar chair,
Beside the hearth-fire's glow,
I sit and sing the tender air
You loved so long ago.

Ah, often since the springs, beloved,
Have bloomed above your rest,
I breathe the sweet old song that sings
Itself within my breast—
As children in the cheerless days
When winter darkly lowers,
Retrace the garden's sodden ways,
And talk of last year's flowers.

It never seemed to you, beloved,
When we waltzed hand in hand,
Amid the sunshine and the dew
Of youth's enchanted land—
It never seemed to you or me
That I could sing or smile
If you were lying silently
Within your grave the while.

We though we could not live, beloved,
If we were torn apart—
That earth would have no more to give
To either stricken heart;—
Alas, the change that time has wrought!
Your grave has held you long,
And in a home where you are not,
I sing the dear old song!

Do you look back to me, beloved,
From out your happy sphere,
And deem me false, that I can be
Alive, and you not here?
Death does not always bring its balm
To every aching ill—
Life may outlast its dearest charm,
And heart-break does not kill.

It would have been the same, beloved,
Had I been first to die—
Another love had worn your name,
More dear, perchance, than I;
Ah, after all these weary years,
Would you more constant be?
And would you drop these bitter tears,
And sing the song for me?

HOWARD CAMPBELL'S WIFE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY ELLA WHEELER.

It had been a very pleasant summer. The two girls, Dora Harris and Diana Oliver both thought so, and Howard Campbell confessed that it had been the happiest summer of his life. A strange confession, too, for him to make; that a quiet summer, in the rural regions, with only the society of two young ladies, aside from the country maidens and youth who lived about Greenvale, was more enjoyable than summers at the sea-side, and at the gay watering-places, where he had usually spent his time. But he spoke the truth.

He was a grand man, physically and mentally. Tall, strong, dark, with wonderful eyes, that held you with a nameless power. He was very learned, too, a fine scholar, and something of a poet, and wealthy withal.

He had been a society man for years. This summer he determined to shut himself from the gay world, and rest. So he came down to Greenvale, where lived his good old aunt, in her roomy farm-house, and there he ensconced himself for the summer.

"There will be no society here for you," his Aunt Helen told him. "No one that you can even enjoy a chat with, unless it be Dora Harris, Squire Harris's daughter. She is a sweet girl, and a nice little body as well. She often comes and reads to me, my old eyes are so poor and dim. Her father is an able man, and quite looked up to in these parts."

That very afternoon Dora presented herself at Aunt Helen's! She did not know of the arrival at the old farm-house, and came bounding in, in her usual careless way, hat in hand, before she caught sight of the stranger seated at the open window. Then she stopped, all confusion.

"It is my nephew, Mr. Campbell, Miss Harris. Howard, this is my dear young friend, Dora Harris, of whom we were just speaking," the old lady said with courteous grace. Then turning to Dora, "I was just telling my nephew that he would find Greenvale very dull, but I hoped in your society he would find some pleasure. He has come to spend the summer with us."

"I am sure we shall be glad to welcome him to our home," Dora answered, blushing beautifully, "and after next week he will find it quite pleasant, for my cousin, Miss Oliver, from the city, is coming to spend the summer in Greenvale also. She is a charming girl, and I am sure Mr. Campbell will enjoy her society."

Howard bowed his head. "I am sure Greenvale does not need the addition of another lady to make it a most attractive resort," he said smilingly, "but I presume I shall enjoy your cousin's society, as you say. At all events I shall take advantage of your permission, and call at an early day."

Howard *did* call twice before Diana Oliver came. He found Dora a most sweet girl, as his aunt had said; sweet in person and mind. Gentle, intelligent, modest, and with the bearing of a lady, a fresh, fair, pure, unsophisticated child of nature. He found Diana Oliver something different. She was, as Dora had said, a thoroughly charming woman. She had seen twenty-four years, and had been in society all her life. She had danced and flirted till her very soul was sick of it all. She had been admired, and petted, and loved; she had lived on admiration till she had grown weary of it. She had fancied a dozen men, and never loved one. At least she told herself so, and tried to believe it. But down in the depths of her heart she knew that she *had* loved one man, years and years ago, it seemed ages in the first flush of her beautiful youth, when she was as innocent of flirtations and all things of that kind as Dora Harris. She had loved a noble man many years her senior, who looked upon her as a pretty child, and married, and died, never suspecting how she cared for him. She could remember her sharp, blind agony when she heard of his marriage, and her holy sorrow at his death. Since then she had fancied herself in love a dozen times, but always awoke to the consciousness of her mistake ere it was too late. She believed that she should love again—that her heart was capable of a grand passion, and she awaited its coming. But she was weary of society, and was glad to hide herself in the rural wilds of Greenvale.

And there she found Howard Campbell, the invincible. He was not a stranger to her. She knew him by reputation. Knew him to be the sought after, the admired, the invulnerable. Perhaps Howard Campbell had some memory of *his* early youth that filled up the guest-chamber in his heart! At all events the room seemed likely to go unoccupied by any *living* creature since belles and beauties tried their arts upon him vainly.

He was a superb specimen of manhood, Diana confessed. She did not wonder that ambitious belles longed to see him at their feet. It would not be a difficult task for any woman to love him, she thought.

He came often to the Harris home. Almost every evening the three spent together. He showed no preference; was as courtly and attentive to Dora as to Diana, but devoted to neither. It galled Diana a little. She was not accustomed to this style of treatment from men. They usually *did* show a preference in her society. And Howard Campbell was so much grander and nobler than any man she had seen in years and years. No woman could resist him, she thought, if he were once to plead.

HAT-TITUDE'S EVERYTHING.

Astounding change of costume affected the other day by the March winds.

The pleasant days passed by. It seemed like a golden dream, the happy summer as it slipped into the past. And now Diana was going back to her city home. Letters from her parents and friends, poured in upon her begging her to return. She was rested and refreshed, and she knew that she must go. So she began to pack her trunks, and make her preparations for departure. There was a dull ache at her heart as she did it, an ache that she wondered at. "Am I in love at last?" she asked herself; "I am afraid so. He is the grandest man I ever saw—and I cannot reach his heart."

But she *had* reached it already. He surprised her sitting alone by the window that evening, and taking her hand, he began in his low, thrilling voice, to tell her of his love. She listened trembling with sudden, strange emotion. There was much of surprise, something of triumph—but was there any love, *real* love in her heart for him?

"Oh, wait," she said, "I cannot answer you now. Wait until to-morrow." Twenty-four hours before, she had thought that no woman could resist his pleading. But she thought him unattainable then.

She went up to her room and sat down to think; and sitting there, she told herself the saddest thing that ever a woman told her heart—that the power to love, wholly, all absorbingly and passionately, had forever passed away from her.

"I thought I *should* love so, sometime," she said, "but I know now that I never can. No man could awaken a stronger feeling in my heart than Howard Campbell, and I simply *like* him. I thought I loved him, but now that I know he is mine, if I choose to take him, half the interest in the acquaintance has died out. No, this is not love, in its fullest sense. And yet, since it is all I can feel, why not accept him? He is such a gentleman, so noble, I should always be proud of him: I cannot do better, and it is not pleasant to be an old maid."

So she decided to accept him. Just then, Dora came into the room.

"Oh, Diana," she cried, "how can we let you go! It will be so lonely without you. So lonely; and then in a few weeks Mr. Campbell will go, and—oh, life will be unbearable then!"

Diana glanced at her in surprise. The passion in her voice startled her.

She sat looking out over the hills, with sad dreamy eyes. Suddenly she spoke.

"Diana, do you not think it strange that Mr. Campbell has never married?"

"A little; yes."

"I wonder if he has ever loved? It seems to me he is too grand to love any earthly woman. Why, Diana, to be loved *one hour* by a man like him, a woman ought to be willing to die; to die any lingering death, too, and be happy, remembering that he had loved her for an hour."

Diana's heart almost stopped beating. She remembered when *she* had loved a man just that way. When the tortures of the inquisition would have been sweet to her if they were sent as a punishment for *his love*, though he loved her but an hour. But now—why she would rather lose Howard Campbell's love than she would suffer an hour's pain. She looked at the rapt face of the girl before her. "Dora," she said, "do *you* feel so?"

"How?"

"That you would be willing to suffer any pain for the bliss of Howard Campbell's love!"

"Do I? Yes. It seems to me *any* woman would, and I feel no shame in confessing it. It is an honor to love such a man hopelessly."

They all spent the evening together, as usual, with music, conversation and a game of chess. Diana wondered that she had never seen Dora's love before. Now that it was known to her, she saw it in every glance and act. Her mind was made up. "Good heavens," she thought, "the girl loves as intensely as *I* once did. She must not endure the agony of his marriage with another, and that other one whom it will will cost no pang, or but a slight one, to give up. She must be his wife, if it is possible."

She was to give him her answer the next day. She gave it, standing by the window where he had asked her for her heart.

"No" she said, "I cannot be your wife. I esteem, respect and honor you, and I *thought* I almost loved you. But I had forgotten what love was like then. I know, now, Mr. Campbell, there is one who loves you with a love so great, that she would be willing to die to-night, in all the flush of her young beauty, if you would but kiss her lips. She would be willing to suffer all the tortures of the rack to hear you say, 'I love you.' She is pure, beautiful, intelligent, and would grace the most stately home, and be an ornament to any society. Such a love as hers should not be wasted."

"You don't mean—" he began, but she interrupted him.

"Yes, I do mean Dora, and no other. Are you blind, man? Why, her love makes me ashamed to call my regard for you by any name like that. I should not lose an hour's rest, I should not suffer a single pain, to win or keep your love; and I tell you she would *die* for you!"

"But I want *you*," he said.

"And you cannot have me, I say. I am not worthy your love. I cannot be to you what *she* would? I am exacting, willful, perverse, and accustomed to having my own way. We should quarrel, and be unhappy, I know. Dora is almost angelic in disposition, and will be to you what I *never* could be. If you have any regard for her, for your own happiness, or mine, you will make Dora your wife. As for me, I do not think I shall ever marry. Certainly, I shall never marry you."

She went away two days later. After all, it did cost her a sharp pang to give up this man's love. She was so tired, and the love he offered her seemed so restful. But she knew she was right.

A week later, Dora wrote to her in a burst of ecstacy, that seemed to Diana something almost beyond her comprehension. To be so happy, so heavenly glad over one man's love. How strange it was. Well, they were married and lived very happily. Diana goes to visit them once in a great while, but not often. "Aunt Diana" is eagerly welcomed by the little ones when she does go. She is never sorry that she answered Howard Campbell as she did. Dora is such a happy wife and mother, and Howard is very proud of his family. And Diana—well, the world calls her an old maid, a passé flirt. But she knows that she did *one* good deed in her life, if nothing else, when she refused the best offer of marriage she ever had.

MADELINE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY GIPSY WILDE.

Oh! Madeline, Madeline, many a day
Has come and gone since that bright May,
Come and gone with its woe and its blight,
Fading each into starless night.
That May, Madeline, can you think of it now,
As you stood by my side, with your upturned brow
Shaded by waves of tawny brown hair,
That rippled and flashed o'er your shoulders fair?
Queen of my soul, my beautiful one!
Fairest and proudest beneath the sun!
You were then and are now, though bowed in the dust;
Though false to love's faith, untrue to love's trust.
You weep; you remember the woods, the old mill,
The farm-house that stood at the foot of the hill,
The green bedded meadow that stretched far and wide,
The brook that sparkled and flowed by its side.
You remember that day, the sky was all blue,
Save where a white-flaked cloud broke through:
The ambient air was rich in perfume,
The month it was May, our life it was June:
The dress you wore, I can think of it too,
'Twas a shimmering thing of softest blue,
And the dainties flower in that sweet place
Was not so dainty and fresh as your face.
Let me close my eyes, and in fancy's vision
Go back again to that sweet Elysian;
My drained veins thrill now—even yet—
With the old sweet rapure I cannot forget.
You loved me, and placing your two hands in mine,
Said, "Life of my life, I am thine, ever thine!"
You meant it—just then—but is impulse to blame,
If it changes and leaves a soul burned into flame?

What led us both to that country nook,
You with your beauty, I with my book,
That lay unfinished, the romance born
'Mid the splendor of love in its natal morn?
You left me with tears in your dusky eyes,
But joy in your face, and sweet replies
To words of mine that were tender and true
In their passionate breathings of love for you.
If "coming events cast their shadows before,"
They failed in *our* love, were unknown in *our* lore,
For we were so happy, so blissful, I ween
Even now 'twas only a beautiful dream.
You—on my soul—I believe loved me then,
But the love of woman is past all ken,
I back to my duties with joy and with pride,
Holding you dear as my plighted bride.

But you, Madeline, so fair, so unkind,
How long ere our idyl had passed from your mind?
That Spring and Summer was one long May,
Pity it passed, as we passed away
From the sight of each other: the winter wind
From your northern home was not to my mind;
More cold than the beautiful written sheet,
With words well rounded, all complete,
That you sent me in a light and careless way,
Saying, "Our dream has had its day.
Of love's sweet folly, ours was the sweetest;
Of love's fleet bliss, ours was the fleetest."

But the love of a soul is no slight thing
In its pride and passion, that you could fling
—After a season of noontide play—
Its sweetness and perfume all away,
And leave no wreath; but to me and mine
'Twas a cup of wormwood thro' all time.
I crossed the sea; from land to land
I roamed, and on from strand to strand,
And yet no joy did fan the flame
That burned anew at very name
Of Madeline, 'till 'neath the tide
Of bitter woe all purpose died:
The warm life-tide that fed my health,
Crept slowly away as if by stealth.
Now daylight has faded, and life is done,
And all for thee, my beautiful one.

You in your happiness, you in your pride,
You that have always been a bride
In your freshness of nature, and love for him
—Whose marriage vows make it not sin
To call you "Peerless"—to you, Madeline,
I would say, this anguish might not have been,
Were you as others, but you are alone,
In your faults and your charms to others unknown:
You are strong while they are weak,
You are sought, while others seek;
A tender pet, a regal queen,
Alone and only Madeline.
I know your belief, "For each soul a love,
Given and taken and blest from above,"
That may suit the world, but 'tis not in my life,
Tho' you have found a husband, I can find no other wife!
I've sent for you, my Madeline, believing it no crime
To press a last kiss on your brow, to call you once more mine!
To clasp you to my sinking heart before its throbbings cease,
So that are I faint in darkness, I may see the dawn of peace.
'Tis done,—and now a last good-night;
A little sleep—and then the light
That knows no gloom, that needs no sun—
These years forgotten—a life begun.

A Queer Story.

A queer story is told in the New York correspondence of the Chicago Tribune of two prosperous merchants in West Broadway. One of them was married, rather late in life, some two years ago, and after he and his wife had gone to housekeeping, he invited his fellow merchant to pay them a visit. The latter went, and was much pleased with the new wife, who appeared to be very young. They grew to be firm friends. He told her he could not resist the conviction that he had seen her before, at which she laughed, and said that was the impression obtained from all sympathetic natures. Their cordial relations continued for a good while, and one day the mercantile admirer received a letter from an intimate in Boston, informing him that his friend had some time before married an eccentric woman, Mrs. ——, who had the reputation of being several times divorced.

This set the admirer to thinking and tracing out circumstances within his knowledge. The result was, he discovered beyond question that Mrs. ——, the wife of his friend, had, seven years before, been his own wife, from whom he had obtained a legal divorce on good and sufficient reason, six months after their union. Anxious to corroborate this, he went to Mrs. —— and asked her if it was not so. She replied in the affirmative, and without hesitation, adding that she recognized him from the first, but did not care to impart any information he did not himself possess. She had been literally in the divorce business, having had no less than seven lieges in twelve years. She understood the art of making herself look young, and at five and thirty she did not appear more than five and twenty. It was the art that had deceived the friend, and caused him to regard her as somebody else than her real self.

☞ A New York judge has decided that clipping horses is an indictable offence. This does not refer to clipping them over the head with a curry-comb when they step on your foot. *That* is always commendable.

☞ The press and the pulpit may say what they please, but a man in dove-colored pants and patent leather boots is not a fit person to adjust a tub for catching rain water.

Answers to Correspondents.

PAY YOUR POSTAGE.—Authors and others often send us letters and manuscripts not fully paid. In these cases the Department here enforces payment of the deficiency—which we either have to pay, or to decline receiving the letters or manuscripts. Authors will also bear in mind that the Department now requires letter postage on all manuscripts—therefore it is often cheaper, as it is always safer, to send large packages by express.

M. A. B., (Guthrie Centre, Iowa.) You are right; the proper names of the story and author are as THE POST gives them.

A. S., (Peoria, Ill.) Can now send both the paper and chromo on receipt of the subscription price. We are pleased to hear you like THE POST better than any other paper.

W. H. A., (Memphis, Tenn.,) asks: "I would like to know how the expression originated, 'Gone where the woodbine twineth.' How is my handwriting?" It originated with Colonel James Fisk, the former President of the Erie Railroad. It was given in answer to questions of an investigating committee concerning the whereabouts of certain missing monies. He explains it as synonymous with "Gone up the spout," saying that he had observed in his travels through New England that it is common to have woodbine twining up the spouts of the country houses. Your writing is not good.

C. A. R. says: "I want to know how to send to the Lady's Friend for a shirt pattern, the price, address, and what direction to send." Send the price, the number of the pattern, and in what month it was published, and your name and address written as *plainly* as you can write.

M. B. (Ohio,) writes: "Please give me a little instruction. 1st. How should a lady acknowledge an invitation to a College Commencement, and how should she send her regrets, if it were impossible for her to attend. Please give me a form. 2d. How is my handwriting and what is the matter with it?" 1st. Much as she would acknowledge any other invitation. She should simply notify the sender of the receipt of his invitation, and that she will be happy to avail herself of it. Or, in the other case, express her regret at her inability to attend, with her reasons, if the latter are such as she can state. 2d. Your handwriting is a fair one. With close attention to the forming of the letters you might make it a very good hand.

J. J. F. (Paris, O.,) writes: "I would like you to decide a dispute between a gentleman and myself. It is to this effect. The gentleman claims that a continent must contain more than one country before it becomes a continent. I claim that it may be a continent if it contains no nations or inhabitants. I will leave it for you to decide." You are right; continents are the great separate masses of the land surface of the earth, without reference to their political divisions. If, for instance, the United States should spread over all North America, the latter would still be a continent. And also if it should become depopulated.

NELL asks: "Which is the rarest voice, a contralto or a soprano? 2d. Who is the best singer of the present day. 3d. Do you know who are considered the best teachers of vocal music? 4th. What do you think of my writing? Will it improve? I am only sixteen." 1st. Contralto. 2d. That honor is divided between a number, some consider Nilsson as having the finest voice, others Patti. In fact every great singer has her partisans. 3d. No. 4th. It is good for your age, and may be improved.

D. C., (Summit, N. Y.,) writes: "I should like to know about the following phenomenon. One night in April or May, eleven years ago, I saw a light on the surface. It came out of the ground and lit on a whip. The gentleman who was in the wagon took it in his hand several times, it always going back to the whip, until it disappeared. What seems curious to me is that my father-in-law could not see the light, although within five or six feet from him. Also, why should it come against a strong current of air? 2d. Why is the postage more on a semi-monthly paper than it is on a weekly? I paid the postmaster 24 cents on the semi-monthly, 20 cents on the weekly. 3d. If the earth's surface could be turned bottom-side upward for, say ten feet or more, would it produce different flowers, grains, grapes, trees and plants, provided there were none sown. Some hold the opinion that there would be a change. 4th. What is the best route, by railroad, from Albany, New York, to St. Paul, Minn?" The phenomenon which you mention was certainly a very peculiar one. We have heard of no parallel instance. It does not appear like an electric manifestation. It might have been some phosphorescent substance, though the fact that one of your party could not see it, looks as if it were an optical illusion with the others. 2d. It may be that your semi-monthly weighs more than your weekly. Weight is an essential element in fixing the rates of postage. 3d. The earth is supposed to be a reservoir of ungerminated seeds for a considerable depth, though perhaps not so much as ten feet. If the soil should be turned up, some of these seeds would probably sprout, re-producing some plant that formerly grew there. 4th. Take the New York Central at Albany, buying a through ticket to St. Paul. You can take your choice of several routes from Chicago west.

BUCKEYE, (Higginsport, O.,) says: "I see you are very kind in answering the many questions concerning love, the hen and goose problem, &c. Will you tell me a few things which I do not know? 1st. Who owns the largest diamond in the world? I mean the great Koh-i-nor. 2d. Who is the author of the 'Beautiful Snow?' Where can I get it? 3d. What are the points of gold pens made of? 4th. What are the seven wonders of the world? 5th. To be fashionable, what per cent. is my writing?" 1st. It has been, since 1850, in the possession of the Queen of England. It is not, however, the largest diamond in the world. 2d. J. W. Watson. T. B. Peterson & Bros., Phila. 3d. They are made of an alloy of osmium and iridium, which is very hard. 4th. The Pyramids of Egypt, the Pharos at Alexandria, the Colossus at Rhodes, the Mausoleum, the Hanging Gardens at Babylon, the Temple of Diana at Ephesus, the Statue of Jupiter by Phidias, at Athens. 5th. About 80.

FUQUA SIKES, (Carbondale, Tenn.,) asks: "Which are the nine States that pay the expenses of the post-offices? I understand New Hampshire is one. 2d. Has there been a general increase of the salaries of government officers? 3d. What is the President's salary now? 4th. How is Mardi Gras pronounced?" 1st. In the Postmaster General's report for 1869-70, which is the latest detailed report to which we have access, the following thirteen States had a balance in their favor, viz.: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois and Iowa, besides the District of Columbia, and the Territories of Alaska and Wyoming. 2d. The increase is limited to the President, Vice President, Congressmen, Justices of the Supreme Court and Cabinet officers, with the Assistant Secretaries of the Treasury and Interior Departments, 3d. $50,000 per year. 4th. Pronounce Mar'-de Gra, with grave sound of a.

IGNORANT, (Terre Haute, Ind.), asks: "1st. What is the form of wedding receptions in cities? What would be proper to say to the bride on such occasions? And what becomes of the bride-groom; is there nothing said to him, or is he utterly ignored? 2d. When a lady has company to dinner, should she rise first from the table, or wait till the guests have risen? 3d. When a visitor is about to depart, should the lady of the house invite her to call again, or should she wait until the caller invites her? 4th. What would be a proper toilet for the opera for a married lady, one neither old nor young? Especially, what should she wear on the head?" 1st. The bride and groom usually stand at the side or end of the parlor or drawing-room, and receive the congratulations of the guests as they enter. The lady is, of course, first addressed, but the poor male individual, who has taken on himself such a responsibility, is not entirely ignored. The guest is introduced successively to the bride and the groom. 2d. The hostess should rise first, but not too early, as this might seem impolite to her guests. She should wait a reasonable time after the meal is ended. But it is not necessary to wait more than a few moments, unless they are engaged in very animated conversation. 3d. This does not seem to be a matter calling for much ceremony. The lady may, with perfect propriety, invite her friend to repeat her visit, without waiting for a similar invitation. 4th. A white opera cloak is suitable for all, except old persons. Any stylish head-dress will answer, whatever is most becoming to the person wearing it.

I. C. T. (Townsend, Del.,) writes: "Will you be good enough to advise me whether ministers of the gospel are admitted to visit Girard College? We have had quite an argument over the matter, and have left it for you to decide." The will of Stephen Girard strictly forbids the admission of any clergyman to the college, and this rule has, we believe, been strictly enforced. We have been told that, under the present management, there has been more leniency shown in this respect, but cannot vouch for this from personal knowledge. The will is imperative, and the city probably would endanger the bequest by allowing it to be violated. Girard was a great admirer of the French philosophers, as is shown by his having named his ships Voltaire, Rousseau, &c., and he wished that no sectarian influences should be brought to bear upon the minds of the pupils in the college, though they were to be brought up in the principles of morality.

(Several letters are held over to be answered in our next.)

RIDDLER.

Charades, Riddles, Problems, etc., must always be accompanied by their answers, or they will not be published.

All who take an interest in this column are respectfully invited to contribute.

CHARADE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

A sportsman started out one day,
With fishing-rod and line and hook;
He to my *second* made his way,
And threw his line into the brook.

He sat himself beneath my *whole*;
Before him ran the murmuring stream;
A languor soft stole o'er his soul,
And he began to think and dream.

When suddenly he felt his line—
An exclamation from him burst;
He quick responded to the sign,
And safely landed there my *first*.
Fort Totten, D. T. GAHMEW.

WORD SQUARES.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I.

An animal.
A European river.
An ecclesiastical title without office attached.
The name of the top rail of a cart.

II.

A bird.
A cooking utensil.
A prohibition.
The plural of enough, now obsolete.
W. F. O.

ENIGMA.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I am composed of 4 letters.
My 4, 2, 3, is an article for the head.
My 1, 2, 3, is an animal.
My 1, 2, 4, is an expression of contempt.
My 3, 2, 1, is a pet name for a cat.
My whole is something which should be taken often. ELLA.

RIDDLE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

My 1st is in crown, but not in king,
My 2d is in carry, but not in bring,
My 3d is in state, but not in county,
My 4th is in cash, but not in bounty,
My 5th is in ring, but not in bell,
My 6th is in prison, but not in cell,
My 7th is in gate, but not in bars,
My 8 is in boats, but not in cars,
My 9th is in gone, but not in went,
My 10th is in turn, also in bent,
My whole is the name of a city, I ween,
Whose "magnificent distances" scarcely are seen.
Belleville, Wis. JUNIUS.

ANSWERS TO LAST.

ENIGMA.—"Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin."

DOUBLE REBUS.—"Little Samuel."

SOLUTIONS.

1. L A W S
2. I N D I A
3. T O T E M
4. T R O C H U
5. L U T E
6. E V I L

BURIED TOWNS.—1. Lewis. 2. Lima. 3. Easton.

WORD SQUARE—

I S I S
S H O W
I O W A
S W A N

RECEIPTS.

TO FRY FISH.—The secret of frying fish well, consists in having enough fat in the spider; let them fry very slowly over a moderate and steady heat.

CREAM OF TARTAR BISCUIT.—Sift two teaspoons of cream of tartar, one of soda, and one quart of flour in a pan; mix in the flour one-third of a cup of butter as lightly as possible, without rubbing the butter to warm it in the least. Mix up the biscuit with a large pint of water, knead briskly, and bake quickly.

BUTTERMILK BREAD.—With one quart of buttermilk mix two quarts of flour, and two even teaspoons of soda; knead well, make the dough into two loaves, let it rise ten minutes and bake.

FRENCH BREAD OR BREWER'S YEAST.—Take one pint of milk, two ounces of butter, and a salt spoon of salt; warm the milk until the butter is softened; beat three eggs light; mix into the milk one pint of flour, add a teaspoon of strong beer yeast; let it stand ten minutes, or until it has slightly risen, add the eggs, and sufficient flour to make a soft dough, knead it ten minutes briskly. Roll it out in strips, and either braid the strips or make larger rolls the width of the pan it is to be baked in, and bake when light.

TO BOIL CALF'S HEAD.—Split the head in two parts, and remove the brains, wash the brains in three waters, and lay them for an hour in cold salted water. Wash the head clean, and soak it in tepid water, until the blood is well drawn out. Put it in cold water; when it boils remove the scum, and simmer gently, until a straw can be run through it. A head with the skin will take three hours, if large, and without the skin two. Scald the brains, by pouring over them boiling water, take them out and remove the skin or film, put them in plenty of cold water, and simmer gently fifteen minutes. Chop them slightly, stew them in sweet butter; add a teaspoonful of lemon juice, or not, as desired, and a little salt when done, skin the tongue, lay it in the centre of the dish, and the brains round it. Send the head to the table very hot, with drawn butter poured over it, and more in the tureen.

CREAM PUDDING.—Mix a pint of flour in a half-pint of new milk, add salt, let it swell fifteen minutes to half an hour, beat seven eggs very light, the yolks and whites separately; mix in half a pint of new milk, first the yolks, and beat them well, afterwards the whites, and beat it again; then stir in the milk and flour, and lastly a pint of rich cream.

CREAM PUDDING.—Make as above, adding three tablespoonfuls of white sugar and a little nutmeg; serve with wine sauce. It should be served as soon as baked, as well as all other flour batter puddings, as they fall immediately on being taken from the oven.

TO CLEAN OIL-PAINTED SURFACES.—Take a piece of soft flannel, put it in warm water, and squeeze it till it feels dry; next dip it gently on to some very finely pulverized French chalk, and rub the painted surface with the flannel; the effect will be the removal of all dust, greasy matter and dirt; the surface is next washed with a clean sponge and water, and dried with a piece of wash-leather. This method does not injure the paint like soap, and produces a very good result.